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HISTORIES

OF THE

METHODIST CHURCHES

IN THE

SALISBURY DISTRICT

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE

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Compiled

By

Betty K. Simpson

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Presented as a part of the 200th Bicentennial Year of The United Methodist Church in America, and on the occasion of "Experiencing Roots of Our Heritage" at a camp meeting at Bethel United Methodist Church in Midland, North Carolina on September 16, 1984.

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated:

-----to those early pioneers, who laid the foundation and charted the course of Methodism through their singing, praying, Bible reading, reflecting, soul-searching, and the covenant of caring that would enable persons to offer themselves again and again to the life of love through Jesus Christ;

-----to all those, who continue to build upon that spiritual foundation as we unite to affirm our history, celebrate our faith, and accept the challenge of the future.

* * * * * * * * * *

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Because of their commitment and dedication to The United Methodist Church, grateful appreciation is given:

-----to all ministers and laity, who worked diligently and responded with histories of their churches, thus making this book a reality;

-----to Orion N. Hutchinson, Jr., Superintendent of the Salisbury District, for his insight, enthusiasm (which was contagious), support and encouragement in all phases of Methodism;

-----to Clarence E. Horton, Jr. for his extensive research, long hours of love and labor to a given task.

Betty K. Simpson

THE ROOTS OF OUR HERITAGE

The following is a brief history of five churches, who are descendants of John Wesley, and who are participants in the Pan-Methodist Bicentennial Celebration: (1) African Methodist Episcopal Church; (2) African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; (3) Free Methodist Church; (4) Christian Methodist Episcopal Church; and, (5) The United Methodist Church. A brief history is also given of the United Brethren and Evangelical Churches, which eventually formed a union with the Methodist Church.

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH - 1787

The church had its beginning in 1787 when members of St. George Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania attempted to segregate its growing black membership by asking them to sit in the gallery of the building. Led by Richard Allen, a slave who had worked and suffered to obtain enough money to buy his freedom, the group withdrew from St. George's Church, and began to worship in a blacksmith shop at the corner of Sixth and Lombard Streets in Philadelphia.

In April, 1787, Richard Allen organized the Free African Society, and his followers were known as Allenites. Events that followed led Allen to propose to build a house of worship on his own lot at his expense as an "African Methodist Meeting House". The building was completed, and Bishop Francis Asbury of the Methodist Episcopal Church accepted the invitation to open the church building in 1793, which was named Bethel African Church.

African Methodist Episcopal Church was officially formed in 1816 at its first General Conference in Philadelphia. Allen was elected the first episcopal leader, and was consecrated bishop by Bishop Asbury.

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH - 1796

The Church's roots go back to 1766 when Methodist influences were first felt in New York. Between 1765-1796 as numbers increased, prejudice also increased. Denial of church privileges led to the organization of the first African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1796, where it was formally organized in New York City by free blacks who withdrew from the mostly white John Street Methodist Episcopal Church in New York City. The founder was James Varick, who was also the first bishop of this new church.

Joseph Pilmore writes in his journal about "meeting apart" with the New York group (Zion) as early as 1771. In 1800, they built a church and called it "Zion", and added this word to its name.

FREE METHODIST CHURCH - 1860

The Church was organized by a committee of lay members and clergy on August 23, 1860 near Niagara Falls, New York. The first General Conference met on the second Wednesday of October, 1862 at Saint Charles, Illinois.

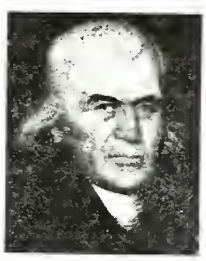
Benjamin Titus Roberts was elected the first general superintendent or bishop. Separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church was occasioned by a combination of issues: Wesleyan interpretation of the doctrine of sanctification, opposition to slavery, free pews, and opposition to free masonry; hence, the name "Free".

CHRISTIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH - 1870

The Church was founded at Jackson, Tennessee in December, 1870 by former slaves, who withdrew from the mostly white Methodist Church South. Revolution, the fortunes of war, and changes in political and social relations had led to separate black congregations, districts, and annual conferences. Negro members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South asked to be organized as an independent church. Already during the war years, the African Methodist Episcopal and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Churches had entered the south and begun to attract members. So the 1866 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South voted to support that denomination's black members in forming their own church, if they should chose to take that step.

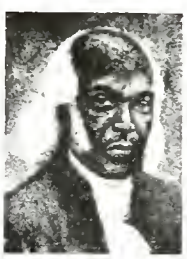
The step was taken, and the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church came into existence in 1870, which became a sister church of the southern denomination. In 1956, the name was changed to Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

Today, the above four churches have a combined membership exceeding four million.



ASBURY

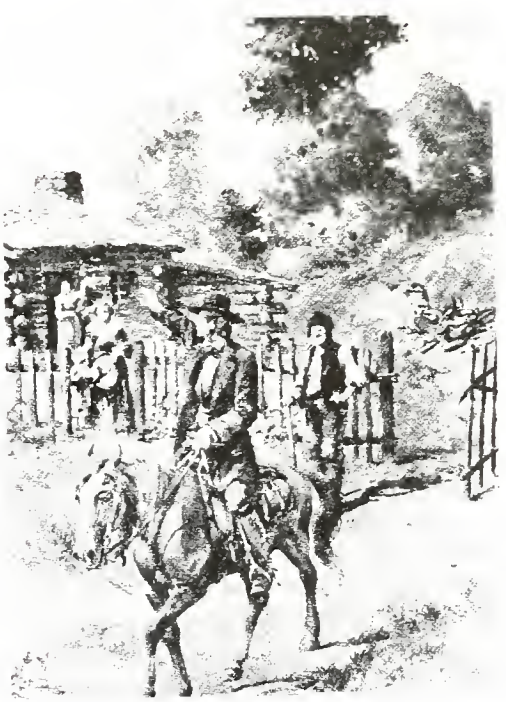
ALLEN



VARICK

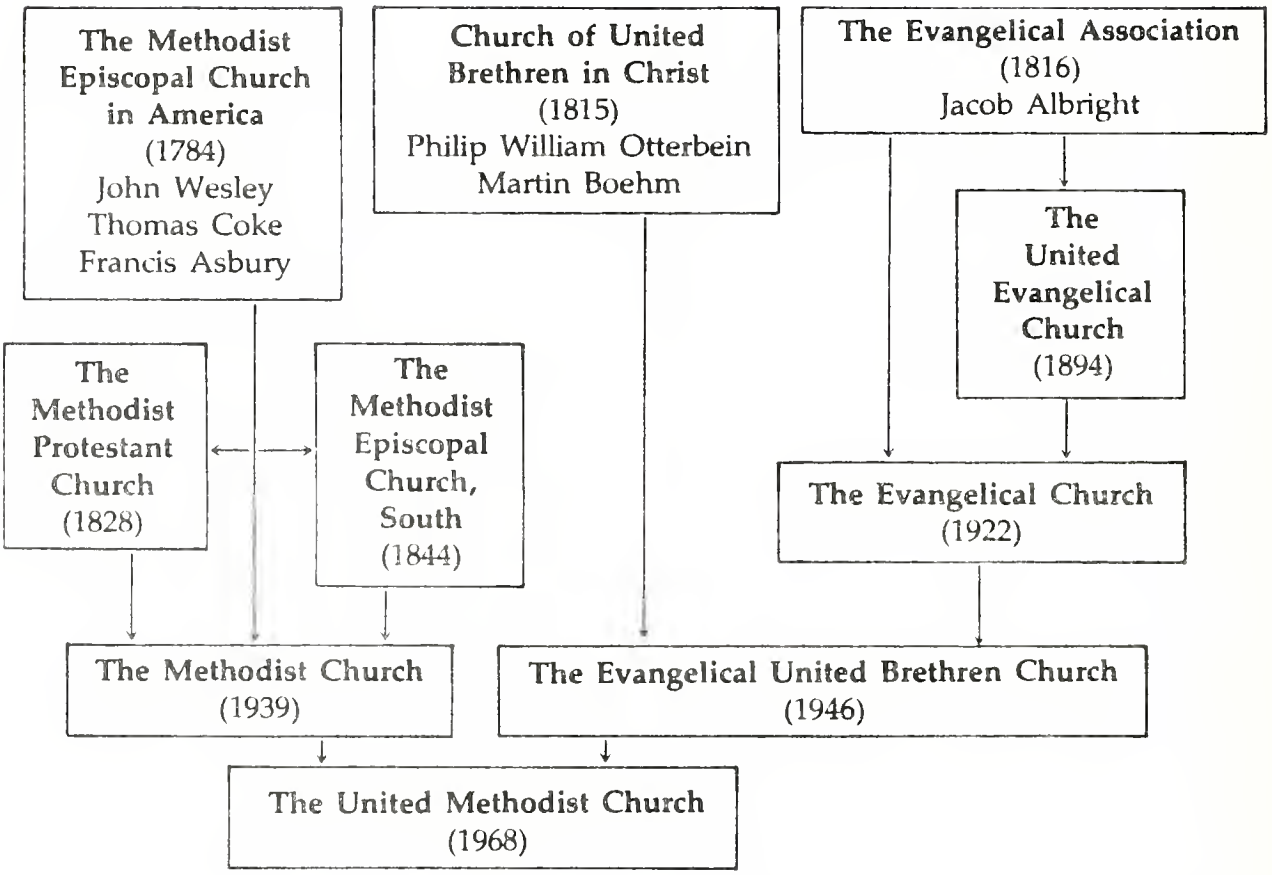
Leaders in Wesleyan Tradition

Benjamin Titus Roberts
Principal founder and first
Bishop of the Free Methodist Church



Early Circuit Rider

One New Church


The Methodist Episcopal Church in America (1784) John Wesley Thomas Coke Francis Asbury
Church of United Brethren in Christ (1815) Philip William Otterbein Martin Boehm
The Evangelical Association (1816) Jacob Albright
The United Evangelical Church (1894)
The Methodist Protestant Church (1828)
The Methodist Episcopal Church, South (1844)
The Evangelical Church (1922)
The Methodist Church (1939)
The Evangelical United Brethren Church (1946)
The United Methodist Church (1968)

JUBILEE: 200 YEARS OF AMERICAN METHODISM

CHURCH OF UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST - 1815

The Church had its early beginnings around 1767, when two preachers (who are now lined with Wesley as fathers of United Methodism) clasped hands in a barn in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and exclaimed in German, "We are brothers". One was Philip William Otterbein, an ordained pastor of the German Reformed Church; the other was a Mennonite preacher named Martin Boehm.

From that experience of brotherhood in Christ came the United Brethren movement - a religious fellowship sharing much in common with the Methodists in the 1760's and 1770's, except for the fact that the United Brethren focused their preaching on German-speaking people in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia.

On September 25, 1800, 13 or 14 preachers, who were followers of Otterbein and Boehm, met in a private home near Frederick, Maryland, and organized what was to become known as the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. Otterbein and Boehm were selected as superintendents. Decisions made then and those

which followed, made possible an expanding work among German-speaking people. They organized their church much like the Methodists. They translated the Methodist BOOK OF DISCIPLINE into German, and adapted it for their own use. The membership grew and, although the war disrupted the traveling of preachers, they were ready to become more formally organized about the time when the Methodist Episcopal Church was established, and during the era when Jacob Albright was joining the founders of what is now United Methodism.

THE EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH - 1946

In the mid-1930's, discussion began concerning a union of the Evangelical-United Brethren Churches. In 1942, a plan of union was approved in the Evangelical General Conference; the favorable vote in the United Brethren General Conference was in 1945. This resulted in the Evangelical United Brethren Church, which came into being at Johnstown, Pennsylvania in November 1946. The union between these two denominations created approximately 5,000 congregations, and just over 700,000 members.

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - 1968

The next step for members of the Evangelical United Brethren Church took place on April 23, 1968 in Dallas, Texas with the union of the Methodist Church to become known as "The United Methodist Church".

* * * * * * * * * *

THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION - 1816

The founder of this church was Jacob Albright, who was a member of the German Lutheran Church. Albright experienced a personal, religious experience (similar to those of Boehm, Otterbein and Wesley) in 1791, where he was converted in a meeting with a Reformed minister, a Methodist preacher, and a preacher with the Otterbein movement. Soon he became a part of the Methodist group, because of their fervency of worship and disciplined approach to organization. In 1796, he started preaching.

He organized his people into classes, as John Wesley did. As the number of classes increased, Albright chose others to give them guidance. With this organization in 1800 came the beginnings of the Evangelical movement.

History indicates that he did not intend to create a new church, so he called the groups the Evangelical Association. On November 3, 1803, he called the leaders of his people together at a private home in Berks County, Pennsylvania, and organized a denomination that was to move through such names as "The Newly-Formed Methodist Conference", and "Those Designated As Albright's People". Participants in the 1803 meeting declared the Scriptures to be the new rule of faith, and elected Albright as "elder preacher".

With this action, the three churches now composing The United Methodist Church had organized themselves for ministry and mission. In 1816, it became a church and was called The Evangelical Association, and reported a membership of 1,500 with Albright elected as the first bishop.

THE UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH - 1894

"Bad blood", which had been simmering since the 1850's, came to a boil at the General Conference of 1887 with the result that there was a rupture in 1891, and the United Evangelical Church was officially founded in 1894.

THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH - 1922

The 1920's were a difficult time for the church, but Methodists, Evangelicals, and United Brethren accepted the difficulties and continued to grow. The Evangelicals decided it was the right time for them to reunite. Their split in the 1890's had been regretted by many of the church's members and leaders. Revivals, mission work, and other developments paved the way for the creation of the reunited Evangelical Church in 1922.

THE EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH - 1946

This came about with a union of the Church of United Brethren in Christ in 1946, and created a church called, "The Evangelical United Brethren Church".

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - 1968

One more step remained for this denomination, which took place on April 23, 1968 in Dallas, Texas when a dream was consecrated with the union of the Methodist Church, and was called, "The United Methodist Church".

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THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH: 1784 - 1984

The United Methodist Church shares a common history and theological heritage with other Methodist Wesleyan bodies. The life and ministry of John Wesley (1703-1791) is the point of origination for their mutual roots.

The Methodists received its name while The Wesley brothers were at Oxford University, where they organized the "Holy Club". Members of the Club were methodical in all they did: arising at 4:00 A.M. for two hours of Bible study, prayer, and meditation; spending some time each week in the prisons teaching people to read and write; dispensing baskets of food to the needy, and doing other acts of charity. It was because of this methodical way of living that they were nicknamed "the Methodists". They felt honored by the name and kept it, later calling the societies "Methodist"; and, finally giving the name to the church.

Both John and Charles Wesley were Church of England missionaries to the American Georgia colony in 1736. Following their religious renewal in 1738, The Wesleys' succeeded in conceiving a Methodist movement in England.

The first Methodists arrived in the colonies in 1760. Among them were Robert Strawbridge, an immigrant farmer, who was responsible for building the first meeting house in America. Francis Asbury (1745-1816) was the greatest figure in early Methodist, and was second only to John Wesley in world Methodism. His energetic devotion to the principles of Wesleyan theology, ministry, and organization shaped American Methodism in a way matched by no other individual. He set the pace for the itinerant ministry by riding more than 250,000 miles preaching, establishing Methodist societies, and superintending the American work as directed by Wesley.

Following the victory of the colonies, Wesley realized that a complete break had come between the English Church and the American Societies; therefore, he decided to have the Societies organize into a new denomination.

THE CHRISTMAS CONFERENCE - 1784

On Friday, December 24, 1784 at 10:00 A.M., Thomas Coke convened the famous Christmas Conference at Lovely Lane meetinghouse in Baltimore, Maryland. Sixty of the 82 American Methodist preachers attended, including two blacks, Harry Hosier and Richard Allen, to chart the future course of the movement. They unanimously elected Francis Asbury to be the first Methodist bishop in America; thus, becoming the first person to be ordained deacon on December 25, then elder on the 26th, and consecrated bishop on the 27th on successive days. At Asbury's request, Philip William Otterbein took part in the consecration ceremonies that made him bishop. It was at this gathering that the movement became organized as the Methodist Episcopal Church; thereby formally establishing the Methodist Church in America.

The message preached to the people was simple: a message of God's love. The preachers went out looking for people, and wherever they found them in fields or barns, around the kitchen table or the tavern bar, they challenged them to a life in Christ. Circuit-riding preachers visited the fledgling

congregations on a regular basis. Presiding elders (later called district superintendents) also made the rounds. Characteristic of the worship of this period was camp meetings. Here people from miles around would gather to listen to preachers who stood on tree stumps or temporary platforms.

In the years following the Christmas Conference, the Methodist Episcopal Church adopted a quadrennial General Conference, the first of which was held in 1792; drafted a Constitution in 1808; refined its structure; established a publishing house; and, became ardent proponent of revivalism and camp meetings.

History indicates that from the very beginning, laymen contributed greatly toward the progress of early Methodism in the colonies. Yet the government that was formed, including church property, was a government entirely for and by the preachers. Out of this exclusive ministerial authority arose several facets of friction and discontent. Another issue of discontent among the ministers dealt with the power of the bishop.

During the 1820's, an organized effort to curb the power of bishops, to elect presiding elders (district superintendents), and to provide for lay membership in the annual and general conferences was begun. When these demands went unanswered, they left the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1828, and founded the Methodist Protestant Church in 1830. History points out that the Methodist Episcopal Church never changed its basic official position that the annual conference was a preacher's conference.

THE METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH - 1830

The 19th century of the church was a time of testing and division. A schism in 1830 over lay representation and other lay issues; and, the authority of the bishop resulted in about 5,000 preachers and lay members leaving the Methodist Episcopal Church, and forming a new body called the Methodist Protestant Church. This new body remained a strong church until 1939 when it united in the Methodist Church.

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH - 1844

John Wesley was an ardent opponent of slavery. As the 19th century progressed, it became evident that tensions were deepening in Methodism as well as in the nation over the slavery question. The largest rupture in the history of American Methodism followed the 1844 General Conference, which dealt with the slavery issue. It was during this Conference that a Plan of Separation, which permitted annual conferences in slaveholding states to separate from the Methodist Episcopal Church, was presented and adopted.

By the time the month-long Conference adjourned, provision had been made for the organization of a Methodist Church in the South that would be congenial to slavery. This became a reality in 1846, when the first General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South was convened in Petersburg, Virginia.

During the 1920's and 1930's, conversations were aimed at bringing these three denominations together: 4.7 million in the Methodist Episcopal Church; 2.8 million in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and, just under 200,000 in the Methodist Protestant Church.

THE METHODIST CHURCH - 1939

The long road to reunion culminated in the Uniting Conference in the spring of 1939 in Kansas City, which brought together the Methodist Episcopal, the Methodist Protestant, and the Methodist Episcopal, South Churches in The Methodist Church. At the time of this formation, it included approximately 7.7 million members.

Uniting Conference, Kansas City, 1939
Left to right: Bishop James Straughn, Bishop Edwin Holt Hughes, and Bishop John M. Moore.

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - 1968

After years of discussion with the Evangelical United Brethren Church - itself a product of a union in 1946 with the Evangelical Church and the Church of United Brethren in Christ - the Methodist and the Evangelical United Brethren Churches were joined on April 23, 1968 in Dallas, Texas to form The United Methodist Church.

THE CHURCH TODAY - 1984

The United Methodist Church represents the confluence of three streams of Wesleyan tradition - Methodism, the United Brethren in Christ, and the Evangelical Association. The church is a world church with 23 annual conferences ministering in other nations, and there are 73 annual conferences in the United States. The Bicentennial of American Methodism marks an important milestone in its history.

To paraphrase John Wesley: "the world is still our parish" as the 'people called Methodists' prepare to enter a Third Century of Ministry - PROCLAIMING GRACE AND FREEDOM!

AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNTAINS: THE STORY OF METHODISM IN THE SALISBURY DISTRICT WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

When Andrew Yeargan was sent into the valley of the Yadkin in 1780 to begin the Methodist work, there were already established Presbyterian, Lutheran, and German Reformed congregations. The Quakers and Baptists had strong churches in some areas. Before that time, there were three circuits in North Carolina: Roanoke, Tar River, and New Hope. These were formed in 1778, from the original Carolina Circuit of 1776. The great untilled field to which Yeargan was sent was the entire western portion of the state. He travelled widely through the area, organizing churches. In what was to become Davie County, then a part of Rowan, Yeargan dedicated (and perhaps founded) Beal's Chapel on Hunting Creek west of Mocksville. Its modern descendants are Zion Chapel and New Union Church. Whitaker's Chapel on Dutchman Creek near Brown's Old Mill in Davie County was apparently also organized in 1780 by Yeargan. According to Dr. Elmer Clark, its successors are Smith Grove and Oak Grove churches on Highway 158. Timber Ridge, a school house, was located between Olive Branch and Smith Grove; and, may have been used as a Methodist preaching place as early as 1780.

By 1783, the twenty-one members of 1780 had increased to 348, and the Salisbury Circuit was set off with 30 members. Reverend Beverly Allen was assisted by James Foster and James Hinton. While no exact record of boundaries was preserved, it seemed to include at least Rowan County (including those portions which later became Iredell, Davie, and Davidson), the part of Surry County which later became Stokes and Forsyth; and, portions of Cabarrus, Randolph, and Montgomery west of the Uwharrie-Pee Dee River System.

Methodism in Cabarrus County, and its neighboring counties south of the Granville Line, was to be shaped by a circumstance of geography; however, the waterways, which crossed North Carolina, made east-west travel difficult, and Piedmont North Carolina found it easier to trade with neighbors in South Carolina and Virginia, than with eastern North Carolina. Thus from 1785 to 1800, Methodism rapidly spread from Charleston, South Carolina, into North Carolina's southern tier of counties. Territory east of the Pee Dee River was released to the North Carolina Conference in 1850; not until 1870 was the area west of the Pee Dee released by the South Carolina Conference. That territory included Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, Stanly, and Anson Counties, along with others.

In 1789, Daniel Asbury and John McGhee began the work of forming the Lincoln Circuit, which was to include portions of Burke, Rutherford, Lincoln, and Mecklenburg (including future Cabarrus) Counties in North Carolina, and portions of York, Spartanburg, and Union Districts in South Carolina. Thus when Cabarrus County was formed from Mecklenburg County in 1792, the greater part of its territory was in Lincoln Circuit (called Union Circuit from 1793 to 1805). The eastern portion of Cabarrus County, however, had close geographical and social ties to the western portion of Montgomery County which later became Stanly County, and was associated with the Salisbury District until about 1806 when the Rocky River Circuit appeared in the Minutes.

Thus to trace the early history of the Salisbury District, it is necessary to follow two streams of development: Cabarrus County as a part of the South Carolina Conference, and Rowan County as a part of the Virginia - later North Carolina - Conference.

EARLY METHODISM IN ROWAN COUNTY

The determination and devotion with which the young preachers met the challenge of their hugh parish is a matter of record. Their flock increased from 30 to 375 members by the end of that historic first year. Rowan County alone at that point in history included territory which would later become Iredell, Davidson, and Davie Counties. It is difficult for us now to imagine the obstacles faced by the early itinerant ministers forming circuits on the frontier. Most lived on fried bacon and cornbread, often eaten cold and in the saddle. They slept on dirt floors or on pine slabs, if they were fortunate enough to find a friendly hearth. Many met them with dislike, often with outright abuse. Many were frail, scholarly men, who must have shuddered at the thought of the trackless wilderness. Yet it could be said of most of them, as Bishop Coke did of Hope Hull: "Mr. Hull is young, but is indeed a flame of fire. He appears always on the stretch for the salvation of souls".

Beverly Allen established a small class in Salisbury in 1783, beginnings which were to result in the building of First Methodist Church in 1832. Preaching points were established through the Circuit. In 1784, Jesse Lee and Isaac Smith preached at many of them. In Salisbury, Reverend Lee says he found "a society of truly affectionate Christians". He also preached at Hern's (Hearn's) in the northeastern portion of Cabarrus County, and at Carter's, John Randall's, C(harles) Ledbetter's, Cole's in the Stanly County area and "Jersey Meetinghouse" in Davidson County. Carter's is believed to be the forerunner of Bethel United Methodist Church near New London, and John Randall's became Randall United Methodist Church, the oldest Methodist Church in Stanly County.

The Conference continued to send some of its finest young ministers to labor in the land between the rivers. By 1794, the Salisbury Circuit reported 543 white and 21 black members. Cokesbury School, one of the very early Methodist schools located on the Yadkin near Phelps Ferry, had been founded before that time, as James Parks was assigned there in 1794. Bishop Asbury preached there in April 1794; however, when he returned in 1799, the school had closed; and, the building was used as a meetinghouse.

In 1801, the Salisbury and Yadkin Circuits were placed under the Salisbury District with James Douthet as Presiding Elder. Years later, Reverend Douthet was to recall that James Foster, who had served with Beverly Allen, established a preaching point in 1783 at his father's home in Rowan County, so, that he was early influenced towards the ministry. The District was then part of the Virginia Conference, and would remain so until the North Carolina Conference was formed in 1837.

James Douthet continued to serve as Presiding Elder in 1802, but William Ormond replaced Jesse Coe in the Salisbury Circuit. Ormond's JOURNAL shows the large area served by the ministers in those days: Ormond entered the Salisbury Circuit on Friday, March 12, 1802, going to "brother Robert Field's"; on the next day he preached at the "Meeting House". On Monday, he was in Salem, travelling then to "brother Matthew Markland's" (in Stokes County); on Wednesday the 17th of March, he preached at McKnight's Meeting House (in present Forsyth County); on the 19th, he preached at William Howard's (Surry County); on the 20th at McMahan's (Davie County); and, on the 21st at Whitaker's Meeting House, also in Davie County area. There he led a service for "6 hours at the M. House". On the 23rd, he was at Brother Gentle's, and finally on the 26th arrived at Salisbury, where he "put up at Mr. Yarborough".

On the 27th of March, Reverend Ormond travelled some distance from town, to the home of "Bro. John Pool", where a Meeting House had been erected - early deeds show that John (Van) Pool owned land near present-day Rockwell. On Sunday the 28th, Ormond returned to Salisbury, and "preached in the Dutch Church". This was undoubtedly St. John's Lutheran Church, first erected as a log church by the congregation in 1768. Jethro Rumple notes in his Rowan County History that the church suffered a decline, almost amounting to extinction, so that it was only used occasionally by Lutheran ministers, and those of other denominations, until a reorganization and renewal in 1822.

The following day, March 29th, Ormond travelled down the Salisbury Road which passed through the northeastern edge of Cabarrus County and into the Stanly County area, a route taken today by Highway 52. In the Cabarrus area, he preached at "Brother Hearne's M. H.", then continued his journey into Montgomery and Randolph Counties, preaching at "Bro. Carter's", Taylor's M. H.", James Bell's and (John) Hancock's M. House; the circuit then carried him to "Bro. Ethedred Harris", "Rieve's M. House", "Loftland's M. House", "Russel's M. House", and "Jone's M. House". On April 11th, he began the arduous circuit again, preaching at "Fields M. House", and returning to familiar points in Rowan County.

The area in which William Ormond preached almost daily included the present counties of Rowan, Davie, Davidson, Surry, Stokes, Forsyth, Randolph, Stanly, and portions of Cabarrus and Montgomery. The homes and log meeting houses, visited by him, are the ancestors of many present-day congregations, and much of the area was a part of the Salisbury District until well into this century. In Montgomery County, the area between the Uwharrie and Yadkin Rivers sheltered Reeve's Meeting House, now Center Methodist; and, Hancock's Meeting House, now Macedonia. Bell's Meeting House, east of the Uwharrie River, is the forerunner of Prospect Church. Eight miles to the north of Reeve's Meeting House and in Randolph County was Russell's Meeting House, now Salem. (John) McMahan's in Davie County is now Wesley Chapel, some three miles west of Farmington. Hardy Jones lived near Cokesbury School along the Yadkin, and Shady Grove United Methodist Church is now near the site of his home.

Reverend Ormond is best remembered as a powerful revivalist; however, the Great Revival, as it was later to be known, had spread to the Piedmont area by 1802. Many of the meetings were "union" in nature, being led by ministers from different congregations. Ormond attended many camp meetings at which Baptist and Presbyterian ministers attended. James Patterson, who was assigned to the Salisbury Circuit in 1803, describes a camp meeting in Montgomery County on April 29, 1803 at which two Baptist preachers joined with the Methodists. He also describes meetings at "Gosset's Meeting House" in Randolph County, and at the historic Snow Creek grounds in Iredell County. His DIARY, portions of which are preserved by Reverend Grissom in his METHODISM IN NORTH CAROLINA, shows that he followed the same route described by Reverend Ormond, and served the same hugh area.

Alexander M'Caine was Presiding Elder over the large district in 1804. Work of the Salisbury Circuit had increased so that two ministers, John Moore and James Boyd, were appointed. They were replaced by William Algood and John Weaver in 1805, with Thomas Mann as Presiding Elder.

Fortunately, Thomas Mann's JOURNAL is preserved in the Manuscript Room at Duke University Library, and describes his travels in the District. Mann and Hardy Jones attended a Quarterly Meeting at Whitaker's Meeting House on

July 27, 1805; and, preached at Beal's Meeting House on July 31st. After stopping at the home of an old friend, John Templeton, on August 1st, he rode to the Snow Creek Campground on August 2nd, where Daniel Asbury preached. A Presbyterian minister, John Hall, was also present. When the meeting was adjourned on August 5th, many went to Brother Richard King's Meeting House where "Louis Taylor called the people together with a trumpet to come to worship". On Friday, August 9th, Mann exhorted while Louis Taylor preached at Prather's Meeting House, the forerunner of Mt. Bethel United Methodist Church in Iredell County, where Bishop Asbury had preached in 1799.

By 1808, the Salisbury Circuit was listed under the Yadkin District. The Salisbury District did not reappear until 1834, and is now completing its 150th year of service under that name.

A scrap of manuscript from the South Carolina Archives at Wofford preserves the names of the "Local Preachers on the Yadkin District, September 18, 1820". Listed under the Salisbury Circuit we find the following: "Thomas Job, p(reacher); Samuel Smith, P. elect; Levi Smith, p.; Samuel Auston, p.; Benjamin Nailer, p; John Turner, elder elect; Thomas Cooper, elder; Wiley Ellis, deacon elect; William Shepherd, p; John Millis, deacon elect; John Wilburn, p.; William Thompson, D. E.; Micajah Hill, p.; William Hammer (Hanner), E. elect; John Hancock, deacon; and, John Hewland, p."

The revivalistic fervor which had begun in 1802 did not lessen. Peter Doub, whose parents were charter members of the Yadkin District in 1780, served as Presiding Elder from 1826 through 1829. His diary records the results of camp meetings held in every county of the District. In 1829, there were three camp meetings on the Salisbury Circuit, at which there were a total of 178 converts, with a total of 2,738 on the entire District during his years as Elder. It is very likely that these meetings may have led to the purchase of land in Salisbury in 1831, with the construction of a log church in 1832. Camp meetings at South River led to a church there in 1834, followed by Providence in 1838, and Gay's Chapel in 1839.

Reverend William W. Albea was assigned to the Rowan Circuit of the Yadkin District in 1833. He records that he preached at Olive Branch, "Wardes", Bethlehem, Shady Grove, the Dutch Meeting House, Beals, New Hope, Smith Grove, and Salem. Albea returned to the Rowan Circuit in 1848. His notes list the following preaching points: Gay's Chapel, Smith's School House, New Union, "Clarkebury", Salem, Bell's School House, and South River.

By 1857, the Salisbury District included these appointments: Salisbury Station, Rowan, East Rowan, Mocksville, Iredell, Alexander, South Iredell Circuit, Little River Mission, Wilkes, Surry, Forsyth, Winston, Davidson, Blue Ridge Mission, Fisher's River Mission, and Jonesville. From the minutes published in the spring of 1857, we learn that the Salisbury District had at that time 4,910 white members, with 555 white probationers; 695 black members, with 76 black probationers; and, 38 local preachers.

BEGINNINGS IN CABARRUS COUNTY

The earliest mention of a meeting house, or preaching point, in the Cabarrus County area was in 1784 when Jesse Lee, a powerful and charismatic minister, who later served as Chaplain to the House of Representatives in Washington from 1809 to 1815, and who introduced Methodism into New England in 1790, was sent to the Salisbury Circuit. His JOURNAL records that he preached at Salisbury on June 12, 1784; and, the following day on Sunday, he preached at "Hern's, to a large company .....". During the next week, he preached at Carter's, Randall's, Ledbetter's, and Cole's. As we have seen above, this is the same route, following the King's Highway, which would later be followed by Ormond, Patterson, and many others. Patterson's diary specifically refers to "Hearne's Meetinghouse in Cabarrus County" in 1803. Unfortunately, we find no further written record of Hearne's Meeting House in Cabarrus County. The Rocky River Circuit appears in the Minutes in 1806 as a part of the Camden District of the South Carolina Conference. Thomas Nelson was assigned to the Circuit in 1806, and George Fletcher succeeded him in 1807. The Rocky River Circuit included eastern Cabarrus County, the present-day Stanly County area, and Anson County. The surviving Rocky River Minutes are fragmentary, and do not seem to include Hearne's as a preaching point.

Records in the Office of the Register of Deeds for Cabarrus County reveal that the Hearne family owned land in the extreme eastern part of Cabarrus County near the county line, between Big and Little Bear Creeks. Elisha, William, and Jesse Hearne were listed as landowners at that time. There are few other clues in the Cabarrus County records; however, we know that the Hearne family was prominent in Stanly County for many years, furnishing that County its first Sheriff, Eben Hearne; and, sixth Sheriff, William Harrison Hearne. Some Stanly County historians place Hearne's on the Morganton Road at the site of the old Albemarle Cemetery, and give it credit for establishing Methodism in Albemarle. It may well be that when the Cabarrus County Hearnes' sold their property and moved to Stanly County, they took their strong Methodism with them, and helped establish a church there.

When the Sugar Creek Circuit was formed in 1815 from territory in the South Carolina Conference, it included portions of Anson, Mecklenburg, and Cabarrus Counties, McKendree Church in Iredell County, and Thyatira Church in South Rowan County. At that time, Bethel, Mt. Moriah, and Rogers Church (now Mt. Olivet) were among the oldest preaching points in Cabarrus County. Asbury Church in eastern Cabarrus was founded by Martin Widenhouse, and is generally considered to have been older than Mt. Moriah, its sister congregation. Tucker's was then a meetinghouse in eastern Cabarrus County south of Rocky River, and was included in the partial Rocky River Circuit Minutes for the year's 1810 through 1819. We know that Tucker's was in the Sugar Creek Circuit with its Cabarrus neighbors in 1824; but, like Hearne's, we know little of its tale thereafter. The Tucker family cemetery, located on the south side of Rocky River across from the Gene Bost home, and near the traditional location of Tucker's Meeting House, is perhaps the only concrete reminder of its former existence.

Mt. Moriah, which apparently began when Reverend James Love deeded land for its construction in 1813, survived along with its slightly older sister congregation, Asbury, until 1867, when they merged into Center Grove Methodist Church. The Asbury Church and land were deeded back to Martin Widenhouse on October 8, 1869, supporting the tradition in the Widenhouse family that Asbury Church began in the Widenhouse home, and services were held there until a log church with a rock chimney was built near the house.

Old Bethel's history predates the few records now available. Old records at Bethel indicate that Margaret McLellan joined the church in 1783, and historians date their church in that year or earlier. The first deed for the church property is dated October 17, 1808. Long before the Civil War, Bethel became well known for its camp meetings. An arbor constructed a century ago is still in use.

Rogers (Mt. Olivet) Church was an established church before the formation of the Sugar Creek Circuit. Organized by John Rogers, great-grandson of Cabarrus County's first settler, the church met in his home and outdoors in an arbor until a log church could be built.

The year 1833 was to be a landmark year for Methodism in the Concord area of Cabarrus County. The Center Circuit (at first briefly called Yadkin Circuit) was formed from part of the Montgomery Circuit, which had absorbed the old Rocky River Circuit in 1820. The first minister assigned to the Circuit was David Derrick, who was born in the Dutch Fork section of South Carolina on July 28, 1800; and, thus could preach effectively in the German language. Not highly educated, he was blessed with an innate sympathy, and was described as having "a voice of wonderful power and sweetness". Under his leadership, the work in the eastern part of the county progressed well. He gained 161 members in 1833, and 111 converts in 1834. After an absence of two years, he mentioned the warm welcome he received when he returned to the Circuit. With the help of Abel Hoyle, 200 "souls were converted on the circuit this year and 230 admitted on trial". Six new churches were dedicated, and work began on the Concord Church (Central).

The impact of Reverend Derrick's ministry cannot be stressed enough. The formation of Union Methodist Church to serve the Hileman's Mill Community in 1833 probably resulted directly from his preaching. Dr. Alfred D. Betts, Methodist historian, traces the beginnings of the work in Mt. Pleasant to meetings held there by David Derrick in 1834. Although land for the Mt. Pleasant Church was not obtained until 1847, meetings were held there long before.

Reverend Peyton G. Bowman helped complete Derrick's work in Concord, holding a revival in 1838, which brought 70 members into the newly completed church. That apparently was the beginning of regular camp meetings in Concord, which led to the conversion of many souls, including Paul Kestler and William Barringer, who became leading Methodist ministers. Rocky Ridge Methodist Church, organized in 1842, may trace its beginnings to those revivals.

The formation of St. Paul's Methodist Church in 1855 in eastern Cabarrus County completed the ante-bellum development of Methodism in Cabarrus County. Thus, by the beginning of the War Era, there were ten Methodist congregations serving the Cabarrus County area: Bethel, Bethpage, Mt. Olivet, Central, Rocky Ridge, Mt. Pleasant, and St. Paul's, which are still active; Union Church merged with St. Matthews in 1888 to form Mt. Carmel Methodist, located on the Old Concord-Salisbury Road. In 1867, Mt. Moriah and Asbury united to form Center Grove Church on Highway 200 near the Stanly County line.

NEW BEGINNINGS

1870 was a landmark year for the southern tier of North Carolina counties east of the Pee Dee River. Of particular importance to the history of the Salisbury District was the return of Cabarrus and Stanly Counties to the North Carolina Conference. When the western section of North Carolina was formed into the Western North Carolina Conference in 1890, the Salisbury District included territory in Rowan, Cabarrus, and Stanly Counties, along with portions of Montgomery and Davidson, New Hope Church in Randolph County, and Jerusalem Church in Davie County. As the work progressed, and membership and congregations increased, some areas were removed from the District, so that by the time of the 1916 Conference, the District was composed of appointments in Cabarrus, Rowan, and Stanly Counties. These were listed as: Albemarle (including Central, First Street, and Albemarle Circuit), Badin, Bethel, China Grove and Landis, Concord (including Central, Epworth and Center, Forest Hill, Westford, West Concord, and Concord Circuit), Cottonville, Gold Hill, Kannapolis, Kannapolis Circuit, Mt. Pleasant, New London, Norwood, Oakboro and Love's, Salem, Salisbury (including First Church, Park Avenue, and Salisbury Circuit), Spencer, East Spencer and North Main Street, and Woodleaf.

In 1939 when three branches of Methodism united to form The Methodist Church, the Salisbury District included 66 congregations with 20,394 members in Rowan, Cabarrus, Davie, and Stanly Counties. By 1960, the Davie churches were part of the Thomasville District, and the Albemarle District was formed to encompass the growing Stanly County area. The 1967 JOURNAL statistics indicate that the District, now composed of Rowan and Cabarrus Counties, included 51 charges and 66 congregations, with a membership of 20,203. For convenience, Elmwood in Iredell County and Matton's Grove in Stanly County were a part of the District.

By the end of 1983, the District reported 19,115 members, a slight loss. The Church Schools had a total membership of 10,255 members. Church land, buildings and equipment were valued at $33,051,706.00; parsonages and furniture had a valuation of $4,562,431.00; and, other assets added $1,215.689. The grand total paid to all causes in the District was $3,935,940.00.

Recitation of figures and worth does not capture the spirit of this historic District. Events during this Bicentennial Year have helped members recapture the spirit and pride of those pioneers who brought Methodism into the land between the rivers, and lighted here a flame still burning. There is a renewed determination not to lose the missionary spirit which has characterized Methodism, a commitment to hold the banner high as we enter the Third Century. It is altogether fitting as we undertake this task to recall the words of John Wesley:

"The best of all, God is with us!"

Clarence E. Horton, Jr.

PREFACE

The pioneer Methodist ministers traveled over a wide territory preaching to the people in meetinghouses, courthouses, school buildings, barns, and homes. During the summer time, the worshippers held their meetings in the forest above a crystal-clear spring of water.

Dr. Jethro Rumple, historian of Rowan County, describes the early Methodist meeting places with these words from his book, HISTORY OF ROWAN COUNTY: "The church in which the old pioneers preached most was the temple of nature. Its roof was the blue firmament; its floor the green earth, swept by the winds; its lamps the radiant sun; its seats the rocks, stumps, and logs. The voice of the preacher mingled with the free songs of the birds, the splash of the rippling streams, the neighing of horses tied in the bushes, and the cries of penitent souls".

The above words are quite evident in the following stories that unfold, giving us an insight into the rich histories and achievements of a courageous and dedicated group of 'people called Methodists'.

This book represents the first attempt to compile a history of the Salisbury District and its Methodist Churches. I know that it will be a disappointment to some that all materials were not used, and all names were not included. Hopefully at a later date a more extensive history of the churches in the Salisbury District will be compiled with more information as well as use of pictures.

This book is offered as a Celebration of Methodism's Bicentennial Year with the hope that you will find these histories exciting to read as well as using it as a resource and record information.

May it help to recreate anew a spirit of love, understanding, and a deeper commitment for the Church of Jesus Christ.

Betty K. Simpson

July 27, 1984
Kannapolis, North Carolina

HISTORIES OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES IN THE SALISBURY DISTRICT

BETHEL - 1780

Bethel Church is the oldest Methodist Church in Cabarrus County with history that predates the few records now available. It is a matter of record that Margaret McLellan was received into the church in August 1783, and historians date their church in that year or earlier. Records of the church list these early members: Margaret Gray, Beverly Gray, David Taylor, Mary Taylor, David White, John Garmon, Thomas McEachren, Jane Caldwell McEachren, Alexander McLarty, James McLarty, Claboun Freeman, Thomas Love, Ester Newell, John Newell, and Mariah Howell. Tradition informs us that the first members of the church met in a log house across the branch to the right of the road, which leads from Highway 27 to the little village of Cabarrus.

Early in the year of 1808 Bishop Francis Asbury, the Methodist circuit rider, on a missionary trip through Cabarrus County spent Thursday night, January 14th, at the home of Captain Archibald McCurdy on Rocky River. On October 17 of the same year, members of Bethel Church purchased a wooded tract of land from Thomas McEachren as a site for a meeting house. The property was secured for the consideration of one pound. "A trust clause in the indenture turns the property over to the trustees of the church and their successors in office for the purpose of a house of worship for the Methodist Church in which they shall have the liberty to execute all of the DISCIPLINE which from time to time may be agreed on by the General Conference".

The story of the erection of a church building on the new site is an interesting one. Father David Taylor was dissatisfied with the congregation's Sabbath Day decision to postpone construction of a new meeting house; so, he set out early on Monday morning and began cutting oak logs in the grove. When asked what he was doing, he replied that he was cutting logs for the new church building. The news spread through the community, and before the end of the week, the members of the church had cut enough logs to build a meeting house. The log building, which owed its being to Taylor's faith and work, was used by the congregation for over forty years. At the middle of the 19th century, the original meeting house was replaced by a frame building, which served the needs of the congregation until the modern brick structure was erected in 1924.

The year of 1815 was one of growth and progress for the church. It was on May 5th of this year that Bethel was host to Methodist Churches, which were members of the Sugar Creek Circuit. Methodist churches which sent delegates to this historic meeting were: Bethel, Mt. Moriah, Rogers (Mt. Olivet), Roses, McCorkle, Mayhews, Martin, Charlotte, Chalk Level, Cithcoats, Thyatira, Wallace, Harrison, New Hope, Howell, and Christenbury. The presiding elder of this Circuit was Daniel Asbury, a pioneer Methodist minister. At the first meeting of the Sugar Creek Circuit quarterly conference, the two Methodist churches reporting the largest contribution for the spread of the Gospel were Mt. Moriah and Bethel. Bethel remained a member of this Circuit until 1833 when the name was changed to the Charlotte Circuit.

During the period of the Great Revival at the beginning of the 19th century, the camp meetings were established to carry the Gospel of Christ to the masses. When the news reached the rural communities that a camp meeting would be held on a certain date, preparations were made by the people to attend the religious services. So great was the interest in the meeting, they would often

travel one hundred miles in their wagons, and camp on the church grounds. Singing was always an important part of each of these services.

The exact time when Bethel established the camp meeting, and built the old arbor out of hand-hewn oak timbers fastened together with wooden pegs is a mystery of history. Daniel Asbury, who conducted the first camp meeting, was pastor of Bethel in 1824. It is a matter of record that the camp meeting was established years before the Civil War. The arbor is still in use today.

On September 3, 1850, Jane Caldwell McEachren, executrix of Thomas McEachren, deceased, sold to John McEachren, Hugh B. Taylor, Ezekiel C. Black, and James White, trustees of Bethel, "All that piece or parcel of land lying in Cabarrus County on the waters of Muddy Creek adjoining Bethel camp ground on the church lot." The land, which was sold to the Bethel congregation, was a site for a graveyard.

Bethel Sunday School dates back to the early spring of 1867. This school was often suspended during the winter months, because of the bitter cold weather, and poor conditions of the roads; but, the organization was kept intact.

In 1918, a Missionary Society for Women was formed. In 1919, reports indicate the organization of the first Epworth League. The first Vacation Bible School on record was organized in 1941; and, in 1947, the first pastor's class in preparation for church membership was held. Nine young men from the church have dedicated their lives to full time Christian service. Records reveal that these men entered the ministry: J. H. Stowe, Conrad P. Jerome, Thomas Ellington, Alexander Luther Aycock, Thomas L. Kluttz, Robert Alexander Swaringen, George William Fink, William Thomas Albright, and Walter Rowe Thompson.

BOGER'S CHAPEL - 1889

After a series of evangelistic services in the summer of 1888 by Reverend Thomas Settle, which was conducted in a brush arbor, Boger's Chapel was organized on May 2, 1889 with 34 charter members. Prior to the building of the church, meetings were held in the Sossoman School house.

The first building was completed in May of 1889. Hamp Howell, a Baptist, gave most of the timber for lumber, while the charter members of the congregation furnished teams of horses and man power to haul the timber to the mill and to the building site.

Records indicate that the building superintendent was paid $1.00 per day, and experienced carpenters received 75¢ per day. Neighbors and members of various denominations contributed money and labor to the project. The land was donated by Allen Boger, and consisted of two acres. The church was dedicated on the third Sunday in June of 1890. Records show that in 1890, Bethel and a number of other churches were on the Clear Creek Charge, and Boger's Chapel was on the same charge with Bethel. In 1907, the charge name was changed to Bethel-Mill Grove.

In 1895, Frank P. Boger gave half an acre for use as a cemetery with Emma E. Dorton Bost, who was just 22 years old, buried there during the same year. The marble marker still stands at her grave.

In 1943, the church building was remodeled, and the original white frame structure was brick veneered. Inside the renovation was extensive, and new

pews were installed. New and modern pulpit furniture was donated, and the curved altar railing was restored. The original pump organ was replaced with a new piano, and later an electric organ was donated. A marble top table was given by the Men's Fellowship; communion set given by The Ladies Aid Society; and, a Pulpit Bible, collection plates and vases given by Mrs. Edith W. Cooper. More recent gifts to the church include a Cross, candlesticks, a furnace, a retaining wall built around the edge of the church year, and landscaping of the grounds. 1983 membership: 46. Assets valued at $50,000.

CENTENARY - 1884

Two records which survive support the 1884 date as the official one for the first Methodist church in this section. However as early as August 22, 1871, twenty-six families pledged money to build a house of worship for the Methodist Church upon a lot of ground on the public road between Sidney Hart and John Hart. On June 2, 1883, the Salisbury District Second Quarterly Conference recommended that Reverend G. A. Oglesby preach at a school house in "Back Creek" neighborhood "with a view of building a church".

Land was secured in the fall of 1883, and a small wooden church was raised in the spring of 1884. With the use of temporary seats, the first church was ready for use by the beginning of that summer. The church apparently was called Hart's Methodist for almost a year according to records. However, when the First Quarterly Conference was held on January 24, 1885, it was referred to as Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church, South. This leads to speculation that the naming was the result of the celebration of the first 100 years of Methodism in America.

Oral tradition suggest that a small group in the Centenary community started a Sunday School in the old Hart's school house. Preaching services were held in an old fashioned brush arbor from 1882-1884. Work with children has been a trademark of Centenary, and reports indicate that children's services in 1889 were a part of the program each year.

The church grew rapidly in those first years. The Sunday School led the way as it passed the 100 mark and interest increased. Church membership also passed 100 by 1900, and average attendance climbed past 75, which was a significant milestone for a church with services only once a month. As a result, the first addition to the church was built in 1911, consisting of an additional room and a bell tower. Many members of the church volunteered for the choir in the original church building. No organized choir existed in those early years, and it was left up to "whoever felt like singing" to provide the music for the congregation.

Between 1910-1920, there was growth in membership enhanced by frequent revivals and prayer meetings held both in the church and in the homes. In 1927, a "Young People's Society" was organized, which the pastor called a "live group which is doing some fine work". This would have been the predecessor of an Epworth League. Also in 1927, the Ladies Aid Society was organized with 22 members, and on August 30, 1930, the first Woman's Missionary Society was organized with 12 charter members.

In 1935, the second church, a completely new brick building, was built and dedicated. The charge was divided in 1936 at which time Centenary and Triplett were the only churches on the Mooresville Charge (later called the Centenary-Triplett Charge).

In 1948, the first and only organ was purchased, and during this same year, the first choir was organized under the direction of Mrs. Dorothy McLaughlin. In 1951, a parsonage was built, and Centenary became a "station".

The continued attendance and growth of the church necessitated the building of six Sunday School rooms underneath the sanctuary in 1955; and, at the same time, the steeple was added to the front of the church. Another addition came in 1976 including a choir room, nursery, restrooms, and a pastor's study. In 1980, the fellowship hall was rebuilt with added space in all areas. There has been a significant growth in membership with 380 on the church roll. Also in 1980, two new groups were organized; namely, the United Methodist Men and the JOY Club (Just Older Youth), an organization of older members. New life was infused into the youth of the church with the organization of three different age-level groups: Cherubs, Sub-Junior, and Senior UMYF. In addition, there are three scout groups meeting weekly at the church.

"The church's future looks bright, because there are many signs of dedication, spiritual growth, and financial undergirding that strengthens the total life of the church".

CENTER GROVE-ST. PAUL

CENTER GROVE - 1867

On May 29, 1813, Reverend James Love deeded land to the trustees of Mount Moriah Methodist Church. This property lay near the farm of Jesse D. Cox on Rocky River, and a log church was built on it. Nearby, built several years earlier, was Asbury Methodist Church, near the home of John P. Cox. The congregations of the two churches worshipped separately for more than half of the century.

In 1867, the two Methodist congregations decided to consolidate. The site chosen for a new church was in a grove of trees located about half-way between the original Asbury and Mount Moriah churches on highway 200 one mile south of Georgeville. The land was given to the church, and the deed was drawn September 21, 1867. A log church was built, and because of the half-way, or center, location and the grove, it was named Center Grove Methodist Church.

To draw members of the church to a renewal of their vows, and to win converts to Christ and the church, revivals were held with great urgency. Camp meetings, which usually lasted two weeks, were held under brush arbors at Center Grove. During the pastorate of Reverend G. A. Oglesby, a meeting was in progress in which the pastor and members prayed that God would send something to stir the members and others of the neighborhood, so they might have a good meeting. Although the revival was being held in the church, rather than an arbor, the people were greatly concerned and their prayers were fervent. On the night of August 3, 1886 (date of the earthquake causing extensive damage in Charleston, S. C., and shaking Piedmont North Carolina), the church began to tremble ominously. Eyewitnesses told of the frenzied pandemonium of the congregation as pews and other articles in the church were scattered about in wild confusion. The church was a great hubbub of crying and praying. Records indicate that 147 joined the churches as a result of this experience. How many churches were included in this figure is unexplained, but it's presumed it meant either the churches of the circuit or all nearby churches.

In 1920, a new church building was started, and the work was done

primarily by the church members, who gathered with teams to cut and haul logs. The new church was completed in 1922. In 1939, Center Grove was taken from the Mount Pleasant Charge, which had five churches: Center Grove, Cold Springs, St. Paul's, Mount Pleasant, and Friendship; and, was placed on the Midland Charge, which had four churches: Center Grove, Midland, St. Paul's and Pine Bluff.

In 1945, the new church was dedicated on September 30 by Bishop Clare Purcell of the Charlotte Area. In 1956, the present brick parsonage was begun. The same year, the church was taken from the Midland Charge, and became a station appointment. On June 9, 1957, the new parsonage was dedicated with Reverend Paul Townsend, Superintendent of the Salisbury District, presiding.

On February 24, 1958, a new Hammond electric organ was purchased. Other gifts to the church included the pulpit furniture, a lighted Cross, and an altar railing and altar ware. Still preserved as a relic of the past is the pulpit used in the old church.

Among the notable fruits resulting from the Christian witness of Center Grove are the dedication of two of her spiritual sons to the work of the ministry, and one of her daughters in the foreign mission field; namely, Reverend William Black Shinn; Reverend Brooks Jerome; and, Mrs. William Bigham, formerly Martha Ann Eury.

"It would be inappropriate to conclude this history without calling attention to the name of the late Thomas Franklin Shinn, who through the years concerned himself with discovering and recording the events, without which the present account of the church he loved would have been impossible."

ST. PAUL - 1855

Tradition has always held that the historic St. Paul began serving a congregation in the Bost Mill section of Cabarrus County in 1855, although the first recorded deed was dated 1888. Through the diligent efforts of Aaron Bost, the earlier date has been confirmed, and the Church dated among the County's oldest Methodist meeting places. A tattered survey dated May 29, 1856, shows that four acres and twenty-three rods were surveyed off the Bost Mill Tract by Thomas J. Shinn, Surveyor, for the "purpose of building a Methodist Church upon near Bosts' Mills". Although the ancient document does not give the Church its present name, we find the first mention of St. Paul in BRANSON'S NORTH CAROLINA BUSINESS DIRECTORY FOR 1869, which lists Concord and Union Churches with R. R. Pegues as pastor, and St. Paul's Church with E. A. Simmons as pastor.

By deed dated November 19, 1888, Martin L. Bost and his wife, Rosetta Bost, conveyed the present two acre tract to the Church for $1.00 "so long as it shall be used for church purposes". The tract was located on Highway 200, and is some distance from the earlier four acre tract on which a cemetery had been located. By 1890, when the Western North Carolina Conference was formed, St. Paul's sanctuary had been completed. The Church was placed on the Mt. Pleasant Circuit along with Cold Springs, Mt. Pleasant, Oak Grove, and Center Grove. By 1910, Oak Grove had been replaced on the Circuit by Friendship Church.

The original gift of land was returned to the Bost family in 1910 when the trustees of the Church, T. J. Shinn, E. T. Bost, A. S. Rowe, R. L. Hartsell, and

D. J. Little, deeded the original tract back to E. T. Bost, Sr., except for one acre and twenty-three rods, the "cemetery lot", which the Trustees retained as the burial grounds of St. Paul's Church. At present, St. Paul is on a charge with Center Grove. 1983 Membership: 70; total assets: $275,000.

CHINA GROVE: FIRST - 1900

Until the year 1900, the only Methodist Church in the vicinity of China Grove was Harris Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church South, located about a mile north of China Grove. The first service, which led to the building of a Methodist Church in China Grove, was held in 1898 in the old John Miller home on Bostian Street, which was a public school building at that time. In the year 1900, China Grove Methodist Church was formally organized under the leadership of Reverend J. J. Eads.

The first church building was a one-room frame structure, and during the early years of its existence, the church showed considerable growth. The first Woman's Missionary Society was organized between the years of 1903-1905; followed by the first children's organization during 1910-1911, and the Cradle Roll was organized in 1917.

From its origin in 1900 until 1927, China Grove was a part of various pastoral charges in the surrounding area. In 1927, the China Grove and Harris Chapel congregations merged, and since that time, China Grove has been a one-church charge. During this same year, the church was rebuilt. During the years, 1929-1932, the departmentalization of the Sunday School was accomplished.

In 1940, the Woman's Society of Christian Service was organized, replacing the old one. A Methodist Men's Club was organized in 1940, and then reactivated during the years of 1951-1957. In 1949, the Western North Carolina Annual Conference changed the church's name from China Grove Methodist Church to First Methodist Church, China Grove. In 1950, the church celebrated its Golden Anniversary; and, a new addition to the educational building was begun in the same year, and completed in 1952. Since 1951, the church has been active in scouting.

In October 1962, a building program was initiated for a new sanctuary, and it was completed in 1967 with a service of dedication held on November 18, 1973. In 1965, a kindergarten and playschool was begun, and continues to serve the community. In November 1975, the old sanctuary was renovated to become a fellowship hall, and a modern new kitchen was built. Dedication was held on February 15, 1976. 1983 Membership: 664; Total assets valued at: $1,210,970.00.

OAK GROVE-SOUTH CHINA GROVE

OAK GROVE - 1867

During the dark days of reconstruction after the Civil War, Oak Grove Methodist Episcopal Church South was born in 1867. The names of early ministers and members have been lost. Jacob Bostian was instrumental in the planning and construction of the 35' x 50' frame church.

Oak Grove was on many different circuits as the boundry lines changed in the early church. For several years, the church was a part of the Enochville

Circuit, later to be made part of the China Grove Circuit. On December 5, 1892, Reverend T. L. Triplett was appointed to the Enochville Circuit. The Circuit was perhaps supplied at least some time of the year by student pastors, Reverend J. D. Buie and Reverend Albert Sherrill.

In 1951, after much hard work and personal sacrifice, the congregation dedicated the beautiful brick church that is now being used. All of the ministers that faithfully served during her 116-year history are honored pictorially in the church vestibule. Oak Grove is currently joined with South China Grove; and, has an approximate membership of 200.

SOUTH CHINA GROVE - 1934

South China Grove was organized as the first Methodist Protestant Church of China Grove in 1934 by Reverend J. O. Fry and Dr. R. M. Andrews, then Annual Conference President. Upon completion of the church sanctuary, Reverend R. Lee Moser conducted the first service on the second Sunday in September 1935. While the sanctuary was being built, services were conducted in homes, and at a vacant store building.

During 1941, four Sunday School rooms were added; and, in 1948, a basement was dug and four more Sunday School rooms were added. In 1953, a new church front was built, and the entire structure was brick veneered during the same year.

In 1968, a new educational building was completed, consisting of six Sunday School rooms, kitchen, and a fellowship hall. 1983 Membership: 106.

COLD SPRINGS - 1868

Cold Springs Church began about 144 years ago as a campground. As far back as 1830 or 1840, people would gather for camp meetings around the cold springs for which the church is named today. The first deed for Cold Springs was made from Martin L. and Mauney Bost to Thomas Shinn, Jacob Smith, Jacob Faggart, Daniel Bangle, George A. Pitts, Monroe Dove, Matthias Bost, C. P. Cox, and P. B. C. Smith as Trustees of Cold Springs Campground. A total of $609.50 was paid for the 52 acres on October 1, 1860.

The first church was built near the site of the present flag pole in the year of 1868. It belonged to the South Carolina Conference, but was transferred to the North Carolina Conference in December, 1869.

August was the month for a two-week revival meeting with people coming in wagons and buggies from miles around to attend the camp meeting. There were a lot of small, one-room huts built out of slabs or rough planks for the families to live in while they attended the services.

Between 1868-1870, the name was changed to Cold Springs Methodist Episcopal Church South. The present church was built in 1910-1911 with the first sermon preached by Reverend N. R. Richardson in October, 1911. Dedication was held on October 20, 1912 with Reverend J. C. Rowe assisting Mr. Richardson.

A one-room school house called Cold Springs School was located where the

ball field is now, but the school closed around 1910. Thirty-five preachers served the Mt. Pleasant Circuit before Cold Springs became a station. In 1955, Reverend Jack Smith became the church's first full-time pastor.

The first Sunday School rooms were built in 1938. The Sunday School rooms in the west wing were built in 1951; the parsonage in 1954; and, the fellowship hall in 1958.

Nine ministers have gone out from the church; namely, Z. E. Barnhardt, J. H. Barnhardt, C. C. Barnhardt, P. W. Tucker, J. L. Smith, B. W. Lefler, C. M. Barnhardt, Grady Barringer, and Terry Hammill.

The early church placed great emphasis on Christian fellowship and unity of mind and spirit. This is not to say that the members always agreed about everything, but even in their disagreements, they still loved one another and their Lord. Because of this love and the presence of the Holy Spirit, they could overcome all things. Today members of Cold Springs Church are still called to this kind of love, concern, fellowship, and unity.

ANN STREET - 1902

A Sunday School was organized in 1902 in a Chapel that stood near the Locke Mill (Randolph Mill-1966). In the same year, Reverend C. A. Pickens organized the church with 15 charter members. The first revival was conducted by Reverend N. G. Bethea. In 1902, a lot was purchased at the present site for $100.00; and, in 1903, the church was built, which was a one-room frame building. (Some years later the church was brick-veneered, and a wing added to each side for Sunday School rooms).

In 1915, the Ladies Aid Society provided the financial means to build four large Sunday School rooms to the rear of the church. In 1926, these same four rooms were demolished, and a large brick departmental Sunday School building was erected at a cost of $12,000.

Under the leadership of its pastor, Reverend Peeler, and the cooperation of its members, the old church was torn away, and a new church building was erected on the pay-as-you-go plan. In 1938 on Easter Sunday, the first service was held at sunrise. A Hammond electric organ was installed, and used at this particular Easter Sunrise service. A dedication service was held on June 12, 1938.

In 1939 when the three branches united to form The Methodist Church, the church's name was changed from First Methodist Protestant to Ann Street Methodist Church on June 25, 1939.

In 1948, a brick home was given by Mr. & Mrs. J. L. Sides to the church for its parsonage on Kerr Street. In 1952, the church completed its hut building. The church altar and choir loft was remodeled, and a pipe organ was installed in the spring of 1957.

In the spring of 1966, the old Sunday School classes were remodeled; and, on March 13, 1966, the church dedicated its six new Sunday School Rooms. Also on July 24, 1966, the church dedicated its 300 new METHODIST HYMNALS.

By the end of 1983, Ann Street reported 285 members with a church school membership of 170. Total assets were $473,770; and, a total of $47,020 was paid for all causes during the year.

BETHANY - 1957

Bethany Church was founded in 1957 to serve the Poplar Tent Community of Cabarrus County. In 1959, the sixteen member congregation was worshipping in a converted dwelling valued at $14,000 with no debt. The 1960 JOURNAL reported that the congregation had "plans for a first unit costing approximately $43,000, construction to begin in the very near future". By 1963, there were 80 members with buildings valued at $71,000 and a debt of $27,051.

In a deed dated November 20, 1964, the Trustees of the District Mission Society of the Salisbury District transferred the 10 acre tract on which the church stands to Marvin Gardner, Ray Calloway, Joe S. Plott, J. B. Thompson, W. B. Marlow, and W. T. Taylor, as Trustees of Bethany Methodist Church.

By the 1983 Annual Conference, the church reported a membership of 40 members. Its lovely building and acreage were debt-free, but its membership was not large enough to develop an enlarged program for all ages. To meet the need, Dr. Orion N. Hutchinson, Jr., Salisbury District Superintendent, formulated a Mutual Support Project, involving Bethany and Central Church. Central is located in downtown Concord, and has no large recreational area. With the aid of Central's large membership, there are plans to offer programs at Bethany to attract membership. Dr. Hutchinson presided over the first meeting of the Mutual Support Task Force on May 30, 1984.

The 1984 Conference took Bethany Church off of the Shiloh-Bethany Charge, and it is now a part-time station appointment served by Reverend Charles T. Davis, who is Chaplain at Stonewall Jackson School; and, who has previously served Center and Mount Carmel Churches.

CENTER - 1954

In 1925, the old Center Methodist Church was closed. In 1954, under the leadership of Reverend J. J. Powell, pastor of Epworth Methodist Church, a new congregation was organized upon property held by the Western North Carolina Conference. The first service was held in the old building on August 15, 1954, and there were 44 charter members.

From 1955-1959, Reverend G. F. Houck served as minister at Center, while he was also minister at Epworth. During his fourth year, an educational building was erected, which was the first unit of the present structure. The first Sunday in the new building was January 4, 1959. The old building was purchased by an individual and renovated for a week-end retreat.

Reverend R. B. Liles was the first minister to be appointed exclusively to Center during the Conference Year of 1959-60. The first year the church was listed in the JOURNAL of the Western North Carolina Conference was 1960. It showed a church membership of 112, a church school enrollment of 122, and a local budget of $27,000 (while approximately $16,100 was raised for the indebtedness).

In May 1963 under the leadership of Reverend Frank Starnes, the present parsonage was purchased for approximately $10,000; and, for the first time, Center had a parsonage home for its minister and family.

In 1967 under the ministry of Reverend Gary Brown, the second unit of the present structure was erected, which was a sanctuary, a pastor's study, choir room, parlor, and a small chapel or prayer room. The opening service was held on August 20, 1967. The cost was approximately $109,000. On December 3, 1967, Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Jr. preached at Center; thus, becoming the first Methodist Bishop to do so. In 1968, the membership was 250, and the annual budget $23,000 ($9,000 of which was for indebtedness).

Presently the membership is 279 with a church school membership of 152, and the annual budget just over $57,490. Total assets are $476,263; and, a total of $50,874 was paid for all causes during 1983. The statistics are indicative of the fact that many persons, laity and clergy, have worked diligently during the history of Center Church.

CENTRAL - 1838

In 1838, Reverend David Derrick organized Concord Methodist Church, the parent church of Central. In 1839, a frame, one-room church building was erected on a one-acre lot on the East side of South Church Street in Concord, about 200 feet south of the intersection of Church Street and East Depot Street. The church was in Center Circuit of the South Carolina Conference, which included Stanly, Cabarrus, and a part of Rowan County. An attempt to purchase the lot on North Union Street (where Central stands today) failed, because area residents objected on the grounds that "Methodist worship was too noisy" (shouting). So, the property on South Church Street was acquired, a lot "12½ poles square", approximately one acre. It was on this lot that a plain, one-room frame structure was built, divided in two parts - two-thirds for seating the white membership, one-third for the slaves. Everything was "home made". Benches, with no backs, served as pews; crude wooden wall brackets held the candles for lighting the room; and, the home-made pulpit boasted two brass candlesticks for large candles. Oil lamps were not available at this time.

In 1839, the Concord Methodist Church building was completed during the pastorate of Reverend Payton G. Bowman, who held one service per month. Assisting the pastor were "class leaders", who were constantly alert to congregational needs; and, "Exhorters", who were licensed by the Conference to "expound the scriptures" and to hold religious services in the absence of the pastor. Fasting was observed on Friday before quarterly conference. A "love feast" was also held at this time, which consisted of a "bit of bread and a sip of water". Mr. Willis Elkins was a "Licensed Exhorter", and he, or the pastor, would "line-out" the hymns at all services (two lines would be read and then sung until all verses of the hymn were sung). Elkins would usually lead the singing, and even "pitch-the-tune", if no tuning fork was available. Revivals were held every year. Sunday School was held in the early church with the BLUE BACK SPELLERS being used for the beginner, and the Bible for adults.

This early church had many strict laws, the violation of which could result in expulsion. New members were accepted conditionally, and were placed on six months probation. If they lived consistently and obeyed the laws of the Bible, they were accepted into full membership at the end of the probationary period.

As the congregation grew the original church became inadequate. So, during the pastorate of Reverend A. G. Stacy in 1858-1859, a new church was planned, and 148 feet of land on the east side of North Union Street (the present location of Central) was purchased from Mr. Daniel Coleman for $900. This lot was a part of a large grove, adjacent to the "Academy" lot, and was a central gathering place for farmers who traded and sold their produce. During "Court Week", many would stay for the week, "camping out" in their covered wagons.

In 1860, work began on the erection of the new church. The side walls were built, and the roof was completed when the Civil War began, which brought a halt to further construction. However, the congregation worshipped in the unfinished building until the war ended. The building was completed in 1868.

At the Annual Conference in December, 1869, this Circuit was transferred from the South Carolina Conference to the North Carolina Conference; and the Concord Church was made a station in 1870. In 1871, the first district conference was held in Concord Church, presided over by Bishop George Foster Pierce. During this conference, more than 40 new members were received into the church. Until 1871, the use of musical instruments (piano, organ, etc.) were not permitted in the church. It was during the pastorate of Reverend D. R. Bruton that an organ was purchased in spite of the objections expressed by some members. Mrs. Bruton, the pastor's wife, became the first organist; and, some members, who opposed the use of the organ, resigned from the church.

In 1882, the wood shingle roof was torn off and replaced with slate. A belfry was added and a considerable amount of interior remodeling was done. Most of the furnishings were replaced - the pulpit, the pulpit Bible, pulpit furniture, carpet, etc. During the remodeling, services were held in the St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church and Sunday School in the First Baptist Church.

In 1885, a two-storied brick parsonage was built on the south side of the church. It was used as a parsonage until 1937 when a new parsonage was built on Washington Lane. The old building in addition to serving for Sunday School, church offices, etc., also was used as headquarters for a great deal of voluntary Red Cross work during World War II. It was demolished in 1959 to make room for an educational building.

On October 5, 1891, the name Concord Station Church was changed to Central Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In 1901, the church was again extensively remodeled. A complete new front of red pressed brick, a bell tower, a porch, a church parlor and a prayer meeting room, together with ornate metal trimming over the porch, around the bell tower and at the roof line, were added.

In 1923, a much needed two-storied Sunday School (education) building was added. In 1929, the interior of the church was again remodeled, and many memorial gifts were received. The church membership totaled 441, and the annual budget was $8,065. In 1939, the church celebrated its one hundredth anniversary with Dr. E. K. McLarty presiding, and the sermon delivered by Bishop Claire Purcell.

In 1949, Dr. and Mrs. W. C. Houston set up a fund to perpetuate an annual program to be known as the Houston Preaching Mission. Many fine preachers from Canada, England, Scotland, and various parts of the United States have filled Central's pulpit, and have contributed greatly to the spiritual life of the community.

During 1949-1953, a building committee was formed to study the needs of the congregation. This resulted in the opening of a new educational building on January 31, 1960 with Dr. Carl H. King delivering the sermon. This new building stands on the site of the old parsonage.

On March 13, 1968, the Quarterly Conference empowered a building committee to proceed with construction plans for a new sanctuary. In February, 1970, a Church Advancement Crusade was inaugurated, and in eleven days succeeded in raising $200,000 in cash and pledges for the proposed new sanctuary. The razing of the old building was begun immediately. The cornerstone with the four dates (1838 - the first church; 1860 - the second church; 1882 - the first major remodeling; and, 1901 - the second major remodeling) contained a well-sealed lead box, which held two 1901 newspapers, an 1897 CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE, an 1842 dime, and a handwritten 1891 membership roll.

The final service in the old church was held on January 9, 1972; and, on February 20, 1972, the congregation gathered at the site of the new sanctuary for the ground-breaking ceremony. On January 27, 1974, Reverend Harold E. Wright presided at the Consecration Service held in the new sanctuary. The furnishings, valued at $44,000, were principally donated as memorials as was the $55,000 pipe organ. The total structure contained 18,240 square feet, which also included the pastor's study and a church parlor on the first floor; Sunday School rooms on the second floor; and, a large youth center, a kitchen, a choir room and one other room in the basement.

The L.I.F.E. Center (Living Interests For The Elderly), a day care center for adults 55 or older, began operation in December, 1974 with the church providing its facilities at no cost to the Center. The church also provides its facilities for the Wednesday Activity Center, which is a program for the elderly - some from the nursing homes; others from various areas of the community. The Saturday Church School for the Retarded meets at the church once each month. During the summer of 1978, 1979, and 1980, space at the church was donated for the special school for children with learning disabilities. In addition to these mentioned, the church's facilities are used for other worthwhile activities.

In 1975, a residence at 425 Caldwell Drive, S.E. was purchased as a replacement for the depreciated parsonage on Washington Lane, S.E. In 1979, it became necessary to provide housing for the Associate Minister; so a home was purchased at 222 Rutledge Avenue, S. W. These purchases added more to the already heavy church debt; but, through the grace of God and the liberality of the church membership, the entire church indebtedness was retired during December, 1980. Plans were begun immediately for a Dedication Service to be held on April 5, 1981. By the end of 1983, Central reported 913 members with a church school membership of 431. Total assets were $2,818,537; and, a total of $237,524 was paid for all causes during the year.

EPWORTH - 1892

In the summer of 1892, a group of people organized a prayer band and met weekly in a small school house on Pine Street. During the latter part of 1892, Reverend W. W. Bays, then pastor of Central Methodist Church, organized a church at the same house with 32 charter members. After the church was organized, a lot was purchased from Cannon Manufacturing Company on the corner of

North Valley and Bay Street, and a one-room frame structure was erected. Reverend Bays held the services for the newly organized church until the meeting of the Annual Conference in December, 1893. The name adopted for the church was "Bay's Chapel".

In 1905, the membership began to consider moving to a new location. The Bay's Chapel property was sold back to the original owners, and a lot was purchased on the corner of West Depot Street (now Cabarrus Avenue, West) and Kerr Street from Charles B. Wagoner. In the fall of 1908, the new sanctuary and six class rooms were occupied. The name of the church was changed to honor the birthplace of Methodism's founder, John Wesley, which was Epworth Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

In 1921, a Sunday School annex with an assembly room and five classrooms were added, and the dedication service was held in June, 1924. In 1948, a five rank, two manual, Moller pipe organ was purchased. On May 9, 1957, the congregation voted to relocate, and the site selected was a lot on Burrage Road. Ground was broken on this site on July 19, 1959. The church on Depot Street (now Cabarrus Avenue, West) was used for the last time on April 10, 1960 with a 7:30 p.m. Holy Communion Service, which was conducted by Reverend A. C. Kennedy, Jr.

The Formal Opening was held in the new church on Burrage Road on Easter Sunday, April 17, 1960. New facilities consisted of a fellowship hall (where worship services would be held for the next six years), kitchen, recreation room, and thirteen classrooms. The cost was $163,000. The new building was free of debt within three years, and the dedication service was held on Easter Sunday, April 14, 1963.

During the vears 1963-1965, plans were formulated for the next phase of Epworth's master plan with the addition that included a sanctuary, church parlor, pastor's study, church office, work room, and a choir room. Ground was broken for this addition on March 28, 1965 at a cost of $190,000, which was completed in twelve months. Formal Opening and the Laying of the Cornerstone was held March 27, 1966 with Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Jr. preaching the sermon.

A forty-feet piece of land across the back of the church's property was purchased from Lee Martin in the fall of 1968. It and the rest of the parking area was paved soon thereafter. Cost of the land and paving was $10,000. The educational building was air conditioned in May, 1971; and, in 1973, valuation of church building, furnishings, and land was $430,000.

A new parsonage was built and completed in the spring of 1979, and a church van was purchased in August, 1981; and, equipment was purchased for a playground, which was also landscaped. The latest project includes a picnic shelter on land behind the church. At the end of 1983, Epworth reported 540 members with a church school membership of 326. Total assets are $1,761,000; and, a total of $119,656 was paid in 1983 for all causes.

FOREST HILL - 1881

In 1871, Bishop George F. Pierce directed a great revival, which swept over the entire town, and opened the way for a church in the Forest Hill section. In 1882, W. S. Creasy, then pastor of Central Methodist Church,

organized a Sunday School in the Forest Hill section on Peachtree Street. W. R. Odell was elected Superintendent of the Sunday School. In 1888, the church organized under The Methodist Church Conference with Reverend R. M. Hoyle as its first pastor. In 1889, a new house of worship was constructed on Buffalo Street, which is the site of the present building. The cornerstone was laid with the inscription, "Forest Hill Methodist Episcopal Church, South", and Reverend Pool dedicated the church. In 1890, the parsonage, located beside of the church on Buffalo Street, was completed under the pastorate of Reverend H. M. Blair.

In 1923, the sanctuary was renovated, and Sunday School rooms and wings were added. Bishop Denny of Richmond formally opened the Sunday School annex. In 1954, a modern parsonage was built on North Spring Street.

At the end of 1983, the church reported 661 members with a church school membership of 393. Total assets were $1,285,000; and, a total of $134,195 was paid for all causes.

HARMONY-MOUNT CARMEL

HARMONY - 1906

Harmony Methodist Episcopal Church, South was born in 1906 with Reverend P. J. Jones as its first pastor. For awhile, the congregation met in two different store buildings in the Brown Mill community. They then moved to a one-room school building on the corner of Grace and White Streets, about two blocks away from the original meeting place. For many years, Harmony was on a circuit with Kerr Street and Westford Methodist Churches.

An extensive remodeling of the wooden frame structure was accomplished under the leadership of Reverend R. Hoy Whitlow in the years immediately following World War II. In 1945, a wing, which included several classrooms was added. The sanctuary was enlarged and beautified; new carpet installed; church pews were set in place; and, the entire building was bricked over. In 1946, heaters were installed in the church. Also during his ministry, members of the Youth Fellowship were instrumental in the construction of a Community Hut on the grounds of the Brown Mill. It was valued at $500, and was used for many years for social activities and fund raising events for the church.

On April 4, 1954, the church's dedication service was held with Bishop Costen J. Harrell preaching the sermon. In 1960, a lot to the rear of the church was purchased; and, in 1966, construction of an educational building was begun. The laying of the cornerstone was held on October 16, 1966; and, a fine building including six classrooms, a large fellowship hall, and a kitchen was soon in use. The total cost, including equipment, was estimated at $45,000. The kitchen has been well used with many people working each Friday selling hot dogs and hamburgers, which helped to pay the debt on the building.

In 1958, the church began operating a food booth at the Cabarrus County Fair, which lasted for several years. The proceeds were used for church improvements, including a new roof.

The ministry of music is a vital part of the church's life with Mrs. Dianne Overcash directing the Chancel Choir. Several memorial gifts have been given by members and friends. New Methodist hymnals and Bibles were placed in the

pews; and, a hanging lighted Cross and a Bible stand for the Communion table were also donated.

The church has an active United Methodist Women's organization, which has approximately 30 members. The United Methodist Youth Fellowship numbers about 6, and aids the church in its projects.

There have been three name changes since its organization. Its original name in 1906; Harmony Methodist Church in 1939, when the three bodies of Methodism merged; and, Harmony United Methodist Church in 1968 with the union of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

They are currently on the Harmony-Mount Carmel Charge. At the end of 1983, the church reported 120 members with a church school membership of 45 enrolled in 5 church school classes. Total assets were $82,000; and, a total of $27,875 was paid for all causes.

MOUNT CARMEL - 1888

In 1887, the Concord Circuit was comprised of Mt. Olivet, Rocky Ridge, St. Matthews, Union, and Center Churches. St. Matthews Church was located on the lot where the residence of Mr. Claud Lentz now stands; and, Union Chapel was a mile east of Concord Lake.

The expediency of uniting the two churches (St. Matthews and Union) was discussed at the second Quarterly Conference held at Mt. Olivet on April 28, 1888, and a favorable report for the uniting of these two congregations was made in July of the same year. It was also reported that during the year a total of "210 souls were converted in four protracted meetings on the charge". At this time, records indicated that J. A. Scott was both the secretary and the recording steward of the charge.

At the third Quarterly Conference held at Union on July 14, 1888 with Reverend W. H. Bobbit as Presiding Elder and Reverend W. L. Grissom as Preacher in Charge, it was reported by the trustees; namely, Caleb Earnhardt and N. M. Barnhardt of the Union Church and M. Scott of St. Matthews, that the two churches be united.

The action taken by the Conference of July 14, 1888 reads: "Resolved, That this Conference give the trustees of St. Matthews Church and Union Church authority to dispose of the above churches in order to unite at some place to be decided upon by a Building Committee"; and, it was signed by W. L. Grissom and J. A. Scott. At this same meeting, a building committee composed of W. L. Grissom, M. Scott, J. A. Shinn, Martin Propst, and W. L. Winecoff, was appointed to select a site near Mt. Gilead and build a church from the proceeds of the sale of Union and St. Matthew Churches, or to use any of the material from these churches if feasible.

It was reported on October 19, 1888 that the title of Mt. Carmel was good, and the church, which was not quite finished, was valued at $700. Records indicate that the late Dr. J. C. Rowe served as Presiding Elder for a number of years.

In 1937 at the Annual Conference held in Asheville on October 20-24, the following reference was made concerning Mt. Carmel Church: Out of Concord Circuit make two new charges: Mt. Olivet and Rocky Ridge; the latter composed of Mt. Carmel and Rocky Ridge. At the Annual Conference in 1946, the following change was made: Take Mt. Carmel from Rocky Ridge, add Boger's Chapel and South China Grove to Mt. Carmel, making a new Charge known as Concord Circuit. In 1948 at the Annual Conference held in High Point on September 27-October 1, the following change was made: Drop South China Grove from the Concord Circuit.

The present church building was begun on March 23, 1949, and the building committee was composed of T. L. Towell, Grant Klutz, and Reece Cook, the latter serving as Chairman of the Committee. Many donations were given including $1,000 each from The Duke Foundation and Mr. Henry Winecoff. The Women's Society of Christian Service paid for the altar rails; and, Mrs. C. Ed Cook gave the upholstered chairs and the light fixtures for the ladies parlor. Lewis Patterson and Brothers did the grading for the foundation of the church without cost. Mrs. J. F. Cox, mother of Mrs. A. B. Cook, gave more than $1,000 toward the purchase of the organ. Grant Kluttz gave more free labor than any one, and made all the tables for the children in the basement. The Scott klan gave the folding tables. The rug in the sanctuary was purchased by the church members and Sunday School and friends at a cost of more than $1,800. Buren Shinn did all the wiring and installing of the electrical equipment at his own expense. Reece Cook gave the heating plant at a cost of $2,800. Many others helped with this fine addition. A total of $13,162.72 was spent for materials and labor outside of the special gifts.

Together Rufus M. Fink and C. Ed Cook served as Superintendent of the Sunday School for more than 50 years. At the end of 1983, Mount Carmel reported 51 members with assets totaling $90,000.

KERR STREET - 1906

In the spring of 1906, Reverend J. C. Wooten, pastor of Forest Hill Methodist Church and with the help of some of his members, organized the Gibson Mill Sunday School on the corner of Allison and Freeze Streets in an old store building. In November of the same year, Reverend W. C. Jones was sent to Concord by the Conference to organize Kerr Street Methodist Church. The need for a building was apparent; so, the Gibson Mill Company (now Cannon Mill Plant 6) donated a lot on Kerr Street; and, friends and members of the congregation began the construction. At a cost of $900, the wooden building, which was 30' x 50', was completed and occupied on October 6, 1907, and was named Kerr Street Methodist church. The building had neither basement or classrooms. The membership had increased from the original 34 charter members to 75. R. A. Hullender was elected Superintendent of the Sunday School, and served in that capacity for twenty-five years.

With continued increases in membership, it was necessary to make the following additions: five classrooms added during the pastorate of Reverend R. K. Brady; two rooms added during the ministry of Reverend J. W. Strider; and, under the pastorate of Reverend G. L. Wilkinson, eight classrooms and two towers were constructed, and the entire church was brick-veneered. Under the leadership of Reverend C. D. Murray further improvements were made in addition to a modern educational building being constructed at a cost of $10,000. This

educational plant was dedicated in 1941 during the pastorate of Reverend J. W. Fowler.

On Sunday, January 20, 1946, Kerr Street Church was destroyed by a raging fire, leaving only a few charred records. That same day brought offers to use neighboring church buildings for worship; and, cash donations were received from churches and friends. On the evening a combined service with McGill Avenue Baptist Church was held, it was followed by an official meeting of Kerr Street members, who voted unanimously to rebuild. A building committee was elected, and met with specifications for the present church. Cannon Mills also allowed an exchange of the old lot for the present one, so that a larger church could be built. Ground breaking was on March 14, 1948 with construction beginning the following week.

The Educational unit and fellowship hall were completed enough to hold their first service on Easter Sunday, April 17, 1949. Under the leadership of Reverend R. C. Goforth, the sanctuary was completed and a Homecoming Service was held on Father's Day, June 15, 1952 with Reverend M. S. Richey preaching the first sermon in the new sanctuary. The total cost of the church plant was approximately $72,000.

During the pastorate of Reverend Byron Nifong, the balance of the building was liquidated; and, a new Moeller organ was purchased and paid for. The present church was dedicated on March 4, 1956 on the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the church. Bishop Costen J. Harrell delivered the sermon, and led the service of dedication.

Mr. Charles A. Cannon, who contributed generously in many ways, gave the church a parsonage, which was located to the north of the church. In 1957 during the ministry of Reverend John Jordan, the parsonage was completely remodeled and repainted. During the ministry of Reverend W. A. Rock appointed in 1963, and the first and only minister to remain for five years, much was done to equip the church with office equipment, new altar appointments, and new hymnals.

During the pastorate of Reverend Don Rollins, there were many in-depth small group studies for Biblical understanding. During the next four years under the Reverend John Frazier, the church became interested in social concerns; such as, Meals-on-Wheels, and helping to establish the Jolly Elders, an ecumenical senior citizens group hosted by Kerr Street Church. Under the able leadership of Reverend Charles M. Turner, Jr., many innovative programs were presented. Two major construction projects were completed under his guidance: paving of the parking lot, and construction of a ramp to help the handicapped.

Under the leadership of Reverend J. Hurley Thomas, III appointed in June, 1979, continued progress and improvements were made. A new heating and air-conditioning system was installed in the parsonage; new living room furniture was donated and some purchased; insulation was added to the parsonage and the church; storm windows were installed on the lower level of the church. The United Methodist Men was re-chartered.

The church celebrated its seventy-seventh anniversary in 1983. During the present pastorate of Reverend W. Cliff Stroupe, a new parsonage was

purchased on July 11, 1983 at a cost of $95,000. Of the total cost, $70,000 was financed. At present, there is an unpaid balance of approximately $41,000.

Into this re-built House of God have gone years of study, planning, hard work and prayers. To erect this lovely building out of the ashes of despair, through sacrifices, and the generous contributions of both members and friends of old Kerr Street Church, is a tribute to its heritage and its faithful church members.

ROCKY RIDGE - 1842

Before the turn of the twentieth century, churches were located wherever men and women of "the faith" settled to build their homes, raise their children, and tend their farms. It was during the early 1840's that a group of Presbyterians and Methodists met together and formed a church. The location of this church was in the southern section of Concord, in an area in which the land was predominately rocky. Aaron Townsend, John Clark, Sr., and Michael Brown, acting trustees for the church, approached Mr. A. Q. White for land lying on the waters of Caudle Creek, adjoining the lands of George L. Phifer. On this land, there had already been built a small one-room frame building with the interior being composed of rugged seats, and other uncomfortable articles; but, they were a part of the way of the lives of the people who came to worship, and they took pride in what was theirs.

The pastoral situation was quite unusual. Since the congregation was partly Presbyterian and part Methodist, it was felt that they should have a Methodist preacher and a Presbyterian preacher alternating on various Sundays. Records show that the first two ministers were Reverend Richardson and Reverend Davis. After several years with this kind of arrangement, it is easy to see how a disagreement of some kind could arise. After some time, the Presbyterians left and formed a church of their own nearby.

By 1900, the building which had been erected long before the Civil War, had begun to show some signs of wear. The winds of time had begun to play havoc with the rough cut exterior boards, which were left exposed and unprotected. Built upon brick columns, the building stood with no under-penning until the day it burned. The interior of the building was given more consideration. Walls and ceilings were paneled with beaded ceiling. From the ceiling hung four kerosene lamps, which lit the sanctuary while the preacher delivered the "word" from a pulpit which stood in the center. The choir was located to the preacher's left; and, on Sundays and during revivals, people flocked to the choir.

At times people would get so happy and enthused with the singing and preaching that the church would be filled with people shouting. Mrs. Sides recalled Ma and Foddy Hudson shouting out their religious faith. When the service drew near to closing, the old altar was usually lined with seekers after the new faith.

During revivals or what was known as the "big meeting", sermons were delivered at 5:00 and at 7:00 p.m. People from as far away as Roberta brought supper, and stayed for both sermons. After the "big meeting", there was always a baptizing to bring into the church those who had found the new faith.

A branch which ran through the property of Mr. S. H. Linker, father of Mrs. Luke Early and presently a part of the Jackson Training School property, was often chosen for the baptizing.

On Sunday morning, a nursery was kept by Uncle Bob Weant in the corner beside the pulpit, so the preacher could help keep an eye on the children. Mrs. Barbee and Mrs. Sides recalled that Mrs. Mabel Kluttz used the nursery with her children, but usually brought along a quilt, spread it on the floor, and kept her children there.

Rocky Ridge was a part of the historic Concord Circuit for years. The earliest available Circuit Minutes show that in 1884 Concord Circuit included Rocky Ridge, Union, Mt. Olivet, Bethpage, and Center Churches. Mt. Carmel (formed from the union of Union and St. Matthew Churches), Mt. Olivet, and Rocky Ridge remained on the same charge until 1937 when Mt. Olivet became a station church. Mt. Carmel and Rocky Ridge formed a charge until 1946.

Reporting to the first Conference, Reverend Thomas Smith, Preacher-in-Charge, stated that there were 394 members on the Circuit; that the value of all church property (Rocky Ridge, Mt. Carmel, Mt. Olivet, and Boger's Chapel) was $2,850; that $18.00 was spent for repairs; that a salary of $500 had been paid to the preacher; and, the total Circuit budget was $966.00.

By the end of 1983, Rocky Ridge reported 317 members with a church school membership of 170. Total assets were $552,300 with a debt of only $22,226. A total of $67,364 was paid for all causes during the year.

WESTFORD - 1907

In 1902, a Sunday School class of five women, namely, Fannie M. Dabbs, Blanche M. Raymer, Maude M. Raymer, Mae Russell, and Margaret Russell, met in a dwelling on Green Street. Following the organization of this class, and in 1907, Westford Methodist Church was officially organized under the guidance of Dr. and Mrs. W. C. Houston and others who wanted a Methodist Church in the West Concord area.

In 1908, they began to construct the first church building with the women making and selling various items, and having ice cream suppers. Also financial support was received from Cannon Mills Company, and Hartsell Mill (now Collins and Aikman). They also helped to pay the pastor's salary of Westford and Harmony Churches. Since neither church could afford a full-time pastor, preaching services were held every other Sunday at each church.

Mrs. J. N. Kennedy served as the first Sunday School Superintendent. In 1909, a Ladies Aid Society was organized with 5 members. In 1941 under the leadership of Reverend T. W. Hager, the present building was started, completed and dedicated on April 4, 1943 with Bishop Purcell and Reverend Edgar H. Nease, Sr., District Superintendent, taking part.

In 1965-1966, the basement was completely renovated, providing Sunday School classrooms for children who had previously met on the third floor. The Phillips Chapel was also added and dedicated in 1967 in memory of a former

pastor, Reverend C. C. Phillips. The fellowship building was constructed under the direction of Reverend Fred R. Love, and was completed in 1955. A new parsonage was built under the pastorate of Reverend J. James Miller in 1957.

The church continued to grow in membership, and had many faithful friends and helpers along the way; one being Mr. M. F. Isenhour, who served as church treasurer and secretary for 29 years, and who also taught Sunday School for 41 years.

In 1969 under the leadership of Reverend R. L. Oakley, the sanctuary was carpeted, and new copies of THE METHODIST HYMNAL were placed in the pews. In 1976, pew Bibles were placed in the sanctuary by Mr. & Mrs. Alvie Isenhour; and, cushions were installed on the sanctuary pews in 1978.

In 1983, The United Methodist Women decorated and furnished a new church parlor. On September 11, 1983 at a Church Conference, members voted to relocate and build a new church; and, appointed the following Building Committee to serve until completion of the project: L. J. Foster, Jr., Chairperson; James Yarbrough, Vice-Chairperson; Linda Mauldin, Secretary; Gary Honeycutt; Jeff Smith, Doyle Mauldin, and Brown Stough. On December 18, 1983 at a Church Conference conducted by Dr. Orion N. Hutchinson, Jr., Salisbury District Superintendent, the congregation voted to purchase 11 acres of land on Highway 49 next to Central Cabarrus High School

Westford has gone forward from its beginning until now; and, out of the church have gone a number of ministers: John Simpson, Worley Simpson, Charles Yarbrough, Jack Yarbrough, and Larry Raymer.

By the end of 1983, Westford reported 297 members with a church school membership of 84. Total assets were $453,650; and, a total of $56,458 was paid for all causes during the year.

FRIENDSHIP - 1910

Around the beginning of the twentieth century, 1906 or 1907, the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church undertook to establish a church on land deeded to them by Ephriam T. Bost. Before this, the Lutherans had been having church in what was known as the Old Plott Schoolhouse with the preacher from Saint John's Lutheran Church doing the preaching. Mr. Bost gave them the land on the condition they complete, pay for, dedicate, and keep up a congregation and services there. They began to build and roofed the building, but by reason of death of one of their leaders and the moving of another Lutheran family, the work ceased and finally was abandoned altogether.

In the spring of 1910, N. R. Richardson, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, secured as a gift from E. T. Bost, the land containing more than two and one-half acres, on which the hull of the building with only the roof and outside walls and no floor, stood. A Methodist Sunday School was organized with J. D. Baugh as Superintendent; and, the pastor began to preach with the help of a local minister, Reverend Thomas W. Smith of Concord.

The completion of the church was pushed; but, before it was completed, the pastor, Reverend N. R. Richardson, held a revival meeting resulting in more than 20 conversions. At the close of this meeting on Friday, August 5, 1910, a church was organized consisting of 34 members. The Quarterly Conference met the next day, August 6 at Center Grove, and elected Hanes A. Plott and Robert Lee Barrier, stewards for the church; and, also voted to name the church "Friendship".

When Friendship was dedicated on October 10, 1910, the church was placed on a charge consisting of five churches: Cold Springs, Center Grove, St. Paul's, Mount Pleasant, and Friendship. During its beginning, there were no classrooms; so, the sanctuary was used for all classes together. Rooms were added in the summer of 1924. During this period, the church remained on a charge until June, 1964 when it became a station, and remained until it was placed back with Center Grove.

On Saturday, October 1, 1960, a foundation for a new parsonage was begun. With all of the labor donated, the parsonage was completed by Saturday, November 26; and, dedication services were held on Sunday, January 15, 1961. Since then, an additional bedroom and bath was completed in June, 1982.

In the winter of 1966, plans were made for a fellowship building to be built next to the church. When completed in March, 1970, it included a large dining hall, kitchen, utility room, and back porch. Since the completion of this building, the church has two annual ham and chicken dinners each year; one in the spring and one in the fall. Since then, additions have included a meeting room and a new modern dining room where church gatherings and reunions are held.

On March 31, 1970, the congregation celebrated Easter with a ground breaking ceremony to mark the beginning of a building program to replace the old church. The entire building was constructed by members of the congregation, donating their labor and time. Dedication services were held on September 5, 1971. In 1973, Friendship became a station again, and still remains so.

At present, the church has an active Methodist Men's Fellowship, United Methodist Women's organization, and a newly formed Methodist Youth Fellowship. By the end of 1983, Friendship reported 203 members with a church school membership of 104. Total assets were $509,951; and, a total of $46,416 was paid for all causes during the year.

GAY'S CHAPEL - 1839

Gay's Chapel was organized in 1839; and, its name came from the donor of the land for the church, Mr. Clancy Gay. In 1883, the old church building was torn down, and a new facility was built at the same place. This building burned in 1892. For five years, the congregation held services on the church grounds under the old brush arbor; and, in 1897, a new building was erected. Later, as the membership grew, the church was enlarged by ten feet on each side.

In 1935, the church was repaired, and new Sunday School rooms were constructed. In 1951, a new church building was constructed during the

pastorate of Reverend J. C. Swaim. This building provided 12 Sunday School rooms, a fellowship hall, kitchen, and a sanctuary seating 300 people. Since then, other improvements have been made in the building; namely: porch added to the front; sanctuary redecorated with wainscoating, paint, and a dossal, which highlights the illuminated Cross; and, the kitchen was refurbished.

Gay's Chapel is a church of friendly, caring people serving an area four miles from Salisbury on the Woodleaf Road. The present pastor is Reverend Donald Rollins, who was appointed in 1982.

At the close of 1983, the church reported 406 members with a church school membership of 225. Total assets were $660,015; and, a total of $65,095 was paid for all causes during the year.

GOLD HILL-BETHLEHEM

GOLD HILL - 1883

In 1848 with the Gold Hill mines in full production, the need was felt to have a church in Gold Hill. The need was followed through, and the Gold Hill Methodist Episcopal Church, South became a reality. The original church was located on the Rowan-Cabarrus County line, where today the cemetery still remains. The congregation relocated half of a mile into Rowan County, and built a new church in 1883.

The new church was build in the heart of Gold Hill where it continued to be a light in the community. The church was a large wood frame structure with a large bell tower. The black and white worshipped together in unity and true Christian love.

In the late 1940's, the bell tower was taken down for safety purposes, and stored for use again. However plans are underway now to build a rock bell tower to house the old historic bell, so that it can once again ring out in the community.

In the 1950's, the sanctuary was remodeled and the former slave balcony was used for classrooms and storage space. The large wood stove that was used for many years was replaced with oil stoves. As the times changed, so did the church, which eventually brought electric lights and running water. Gold Hill Church was the first church in that area to have electric lights.

In 1968, the church's name changed to Gold Hill United Methodist Church with the unification of The Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

In October of 1984, the church will celebrate its 101 birthday. Under the pastoral and lay leadership of past, present, and future, the church continues to serve the community through its heritage and faith.

BETHLEHEM - 1913

Bethlehem Church now stands only a short distance from the spot, where in 1912, a brush arbor was erected by a group of Christian men and women. One year later at that arbor these devoted people organized a church.

In 1913, a church was erected through the efforts and determination of eleven chartered men and their families: W. H. Hammill, J. W. Hammill, J. P. Isenhour, Charlie Dry, Tom Voncannon, Charles Lefler, Tice Voncannon, Osco S. Culp, Green Barringer, Bart Kimball, and Mr. Hatley. Most of the materials and labor was donated by individuals in the community. The property on which the church was erected was also donated. Worship began immediately with the Reverend Clark serving as the first minister on the Misenheimer Circuit. The church served the community well, because it had several devoted young people to go into full time Christian service.

In 1939, unification was accepted with pride by the church's members; and, at this time, Bethlehem was merged with the Gold Hill Circuit.

As time passed, growth and improvements were made in the church. In 1953, all of the interior was renovated, including new furniture being added, and the purchase of an electric organ. As the church was blessed with a large group of young people, in 1959 a youth department and fellowship center was added; the exterior of the church was brick veneered; and, stained glass windows were installed.

In 1975, concrete walks were added around the church area; and, in 1978, central air and a new heating system was installed along with black wrought iron hand railing following the contour of the front of the church and the sides.

As of this day, July 31, 1984, the sanctuary and four Sunday School rooms are being renovated. The interior furniture, including the pews, was all refinished by the men of the church. The painting and replacing of the carpet will take place within the next two weeks.

The church has a rich heritage - thanks to those members who in the past along with their pastors worked hard to have a place in which to worship. Today its members with the help of its present pastor, Reverend Mike Duncan and District Superintendent, Dr. Orion N. Hutchinson, Jr., looks forward to the future with great hope and determination.

GRANITE QUARRY: Shiloh - 1881

Shiloh Church traces her history back to the late 1870's when the Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, sent an evangelist to Shiloh School on the Old Mt. Pleasant Road (today known as Faith Road running from Salisbury through the town of Faith). The building has since been destroyed, but the old cemetery is still there. The name of the evangelist is unknown, but it is reported that a revival meeting of several weeks duration resulted from his preaching.

The actual date Shiloh Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was established

is not known. However, it is assumed to be sometime between 1879 and 1880; since, records indicate there was a well organized church with trustees in operation in January, 1881.

Shiloh School soon ceased to operate, and on January 25, 1881, the trustees deeded the building and land to the Methodist. The following is a copy of that document: "We the undersigned persons for whose benefit A. L. Peeler holds the title to Shiloh School and the lot of land on which said house stands, the deed having been made by T. W. Haynes and J. W. Peeler, do hereby authorize and direct the said A. L. Peeler, Trustee mentioned in said deed, to convey the house and lot by deed in fee simple to J. A. Mahley and W. S. Brown, Trustees for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the name of the church in the neighborhood of Shiloh, Rowan County, Salisbury Circuit, North Carolina Conference, January 25, 1881". It was signed by Alfred L. Peeler, J. W. Fisher, F. M. Holshouser, Michael Beaver, Peter C. Ritchie, M. M. Bailey, Commiler Lyerly, Tobias Holshouser, Martin Yost, Lawson A. Fisher, A. M. Brown, and William E. Dunham.

The relationship between the Methodists and the Evangelical Reformed congregation, which also met in the vicinity of Shiloh School, is unclear. No one knows whether the Methodists were invited to share the building with the Reformed congregation or the other way around. It is felt that both congregations used the old school building as a place of worship until the Reformed congregation moved to Faith prior to January 25, 1881, and established Shiloh Evangelical and Reformed Church.

From 1881 to 1889, the Shiloh School Building (now Shiloh Church) served the new struggling congregation. In 1889, DaVault Kluttz and Carson A. Brown deeded two tracts of land in the town of Woodside (now Granite Quarry) to the Methodists. In the same year, a church building of frame construction was completed. This building was located in the general area of where the Church Hut now stands.

At its beginning, there were five families which made up the congregation: A. L. Peeler, DaVault Kluttz, Marshall Jones, William Canup, and John D. A. Fisher. Soon after the church was built in 1889, a cemetery was planned, and the old cemetery on Faith Road ceased to be used. However, the old cemetery is still there, and behind its stone walls are the head stones of those early believers from both congregations. The first funeral in this church was for DaVault Kluttz, who was also the first one to be buried in the new cemetery. For twenty-two years, this church building served the expanding congregation of Shiloh Church.

On March 1, 1890, the Reverend B. A. York made the following report at the first Quarterly Conference after the new church was completed in Woodsides (Granite Quarry): "The general state of the Church, is, I suppose, tolerably good and we trust there is progress. It is true that we would love to see more piety and holiness, and a deeper consecration of all to God. We have baptized Sarah Earnhardt (adult), Pearlie Earnhardt and Allis E. Morris (infants). Two have been received into the church - John Hartman and Sarah Earnhardt. George Crotzer, Polly Lentz and Mary J. Goodman have died. Laura Josie has been disposed of by letter. We have raised $5.00 for missions". Reverend York, appointed by the bishop to Rowan Circuit, served Harris Chapel, Shiloh, Liberty,

Providence, and Bethel Churches. His salary for that year from all five churches was $291.35.

In early 1912, tragedy struck the struggling congregation when fire swept through T. J. Lyerly and Sons' Store. Since no fire fighting equipment was available, little could be done to stop it from spreading. Soon the flames reached the Lyerly home, "The Old Shuping Home", and the little white frame church. The pulpit furniture, organ, aisle carpet, and a few pews were saved; and, a group of men were successful in getting the organ through the door before the steeple bell crashed to the ground.

Because of the fire, the second Quarterly Conference meeting was held at the Granite Quarry School on February 24, 1912. It was announced by the pastor, Reverend J. C. Mock, that a building committee had already been established to lead the congregation in building a new church. This committee consisted of D. A. Hodge, R. M. Brown, and L. J. Kluttz. At the same Conference, the trustees were instructed to sell the parsonage along with a lot, which had a 75 foot frontage, and proceeds to be used in the building of a new church.

L. J. Kluttz purchased the parsonage; and, by the fall of 1912, the new church had been completed and was ready for use by the congregation. By March 29, 1913, the Salisbury Circuit was making plans to buy the property from Mr. Kluttz. Reverend Avett announced on September 6, 1913 that the parsonage had been secured with over 40% ($500) of the purchase price collected from the church members. By 1915, the parsonage debt had been completely erased.

At the Quarterly Conference on September 4, 1915, Reverend J. H. Brendall reported that the new building was debt free and was ready to be dedicated.

At the fourth Quarterly Conference held at Bethel Church on August 29, 1926, it was decided to sell the old parsonage for $2,000, and build a new one. In addition to the $2,000 realized from that sale, the churches of the Circuit contributed the following amounts: Shiloh, $446.00; Providence, $42.00; Bethel, $31.66; Mt. Tabor, $97.50; and Rock's Grove, $36.00. In addition, $1,500 was borrowed from Farmers and Merchants Bank, and another sum from Mrs. Maud Fulk. The total cost of the new parsonage was $6,027.72, which included a garage.

The church of 1912 served the congregation as a house of worship until 1937, when it was moved about 300 feet west and turned one-fourth around with the front facing the present cemetery. It was used as an Educational Building, and now occupies the area behind the present sanctuary.

On March 29, 1937, Reverend T. B. Huneycutt, pastor, reported to the second Quarterly Conference, meeting at Coburn Memorial Church, that work had begun on a new Shiloh Church, and the cornerstone was laid on February 14, 1937 at 3:00 p.m. Those taking part in this ceremony were Dr. C. N. Clark, Presiding Elder (District Superintendent); Reverend W. A. Newell, pastor of First Methodist Church, Salisbury; Reverend A. C. Swofford, pastor at Coburn Memorial Church, Salisbury; and, Reverend T. B. Huneycutt. Miss Catherine Brown read a historical sketch of the church.

The Building Committee was composed of R. M. Brown, Chairman and

Treasurer; R. L. Williams, Secretary; L. J. Kluttz, S. J. Sutts, and J. W. Hudson. On May 14, 1939, Carl Hall and P. H. Lefler, Sr. were added to this committee. Mr. Lefler donated freely of his time, and did much of the stone laying.

Shiloh Church, founded and cared for by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was touched by the change which took place on May 24, 1939 in Kansas City when the three branches of Methodism came together to form The Methodist Church. So, two years and three months after the laying of the church's cornerstone, it became a part of this new Methodist Church.

The new Shiloh Church was completed about 1940, and had a membership of 149 persons. In 1953, Shiloh withdrew from the Granite Quarry Charge, and became a station. At the end of 1956, the church reported 260 members and 41 preparatory members with a church budget of approximately $8,000. In 1957, work began on a new educational wing with the formal opening on September 28, 1958. In 1976, a new parsonage was purchased. At the end of 1983, the church reported a total membership of 367 members.

HARRISBURG - 1962

In 1962, the Annual Conference appointed Reverend E. J. Harbison to begin a Methodist Church in Harrisburg. He began his work by locating folk who desired to have such a church. He was received with warm hearts by the people of the area, working day and night visiting and securing names for Charter Membership.

The church was formed, and began to hold services in the Harrisburg Volunteer Fire Department. The first service was held on July 8, 1962 with Reverend Glenn Lackey delivering the sermon. For the next 14 months, the people continued to meet at the Fire Department to worship, sing and pray.

In 1963, the educational building, the first unit of the newly-formed church, was completed with a membership of 75. The Conference appointed the Reverend Billy E. Baker as pastor in June, 1964; and, a parsonage on Oakley Drive was purchased. Reverend Baker served until his death on January 23, 1965.

As the church achieved a foundation and grew in spirit and number, it had visionary hopes of building a second unit of the master plans, which called for three units.

In 1971, the debt on the church building was retired, and a Dedication Service was held on January 2, 1972. The membership at this time was approximately 100. Many improvements had been made on the church and the parsonage. Plans were begun for a sanctuary, pastor's office, and more educational facilities.

On March 25, 1973, a Groundbreaking Service for the second unit was held. The sanctuary was completed in November, 1973, and the first service was held on December 2, 1973. The church membership was 137. The debt on the parsonage was retired and dedicated to the glory of God.

In the years that have followed, many improvements have been made on the educational building and the parsonage; and, the church has continued to grow

in spirit and in number. At present, there are over 200 members. The future of Harrisburg Church is only as limited as the vision of its members; and, with the spirit of unity and dedication that has thus-far prevailed, that vision and that future seems to be unlimited.

BETHPAGE - 1840

Prior to 1840, Bethpage Church was known as Rehobeth and "Old Bethpage". No records were kept, but according to reliable information, it is believed to have been organized between 1784 and 1790. It is definitely known that the King of England issued the land for the church; and, this grant was secured by a Mr. Stirewalt and Mrs. J. Dayvault of China Grove, and a granddaughter of Mr. Stirewalt.

In or about 1840, the Presbyterians in the area moved to a new location, and through mutual agreement, the Methodists at Rehobeth moved to the old Presbyterian Church location; and, changed the name of their church from Rehobeth to "Old Bethpage".

The Administrative Board, not being certain of any dates before 1840, has taken the date as the official date, and the name of the church was changed to Bethpage. However, the history of the church is remembered to have come into existence at least 50 years prior to 1840.

At the end of 1983, the church reported 646 members with a church school membership of 300. Total assets were $757,000; and, a total of $110,279 was paid for all causes during the year. The current pastor is Reverend Lee Ellis.

JACKSON PARK - 1938

While the Reverend N. C. Williams was pastor at Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, South in Kannapolis, the need for a Methodist Church in Jackson Park was discussed (1933-37). However, nothing definite was done until November 19, 1937 when five members of Trinity Church, who lived in Jackson Park, were appointed to investigate the possibility of beginning a church in that area. On January 11, 1938, Trinity officials decided to purchase 4 lots on the corner of Jackson and Mable Avenues (200' x 150') at a special price of $500. On January 15, the Jackson Park Building Fund was launched with S. N. Nash, Sr., Chairman; William J. Clayton, Treasurer; Lawrence F. Gilliam, B. Elwood Durham, and T. M. Widenhouse.

On Sunday morning, June 5, 1938 at 10:00 a.m., the formal organization of Jackson Park Church was begun in the auditorium of the newly-constructed Jackson Park School with 92 persons present. Reverend E. M. Jones, Trinity's pastor, preached. At 11:00 a.m., the church school was convened with 76 persons joining the six classes.

Reverend John Julian Holmes preached on June 12, 1938, having graduated from Duke University during the week and employed by Trinity Church to work with the Jackson Park Church for six weeks. After this period, he was paid by the Jackson Park congregation until Conference. Mr. Holmes personally visited every home in the community with the result that on August 14, 1938, there were 76 charter members.

On October 20, 1938, the church, fully organized, was accepted into the Western North Carolina Conference at their meeting in Charlotte, N. C., and Reverend Holmes was appointed pastor. On November 13, the first Quarterly Conference was held with the pastor's salary set at $900 and a membership of 103.

In March, 1939, the building committee along with Reverend Holmes and Trinity officials launched a city-wide campaign for funds to build a church. More than $5,000 was raised with The Methodist Church Board of Extension contributing $150.00. An additional lot, 25' x 150', on Mable Avenue was purchased, and plans were drawn for a proposed church on the corner of Jackson and Mable Avenues. A parsonage was rented and furnished.

On May 11, 1940, work began with the pouring of concrete for the foundation. On June 2, Reverend Holmes reported a membership of 204 with 13 members received that day. On July 7, the cornerstone was laid; and, on September 1, services were held in the new sanctuary with Sunday School in the basement. On September 8, Reverend Holmes organized the new Woman's Society of Christian Service with 64 charter members.

On June 9-20, 1941, the first vacation church school was held under the direction of Reverend Holmes with 70 pupils and teachers in attendance. In July, 1942, church pews were bought and installed at a cost of $1,052.00.

In 1943 at the fourth Quarterly Conference, Reverend Aubert M. Smith, pastor, summed up the work of the church in these words: "The church has installed new auditorium furniture, renovated the church school department, added 28 new members, purchased 150 copies of THE METHODIST HYMNAL, purchased playground equipment, tied for top place in both conferences for subscriptions to THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE, sent in 15 subscriptions to the NATIONAL ADVOCATE, enjoyed excellent music by the choir, observed fine programs in the youth and scouting programs, sent THE UPPER ROOM and other church mail to men in service; sent flowers to the sick and shut-in, received good attention by our ushers, seen remarkable work by the Woman's Society of Christian Service, well instructed by our teachers and splendidly led by our officers. Above all we have been blessed by the Week of Dedication, the revival, the World Wide Communion and enriched by our Bible study, devotions and giving".

On July 7, 1944, the church indebtedness was paid in full, and on September 3, a Dedication Service was held with Reverend N. C. Williams, Sr. delivering the sermon. On June 22, 1946, work was begun on the parsonage on the lot beside the church, and it was completed on October 8. On January 29, 1947, work was started on the Carl T. Boggs Memorial Scout Hut, which was completed on March 15 and dedicated on April 20. In August, the indebtedness on the parsonage was paid off with the help of a large donation by Mr. C. A. Cannon. In 1949, a Hammond organ was installed.

The educational building was first used on June 7, 1953. There were 27 classrooms, two offices and other facilities. The auditorium was extended to take care of an additional 80 persons in the sanctuary. The partitions were removed from the basement to provide a large fellowship hall.

In 1959, much needed improvements were made: curbing around the church lot, chimes added to the organ, new robes purchased for the choir, the

sanctuary painted, new lights installed with a dimmer control, the floor covered from wall to wall with red carpet, white-backed colonial style pews installed along with matching pulpit furniture. The baptismal font, flower vases, altar crosses and candle holders were given to the church in memory of Reverend J. P. Hipps by his children. This work was completed the first of January, 1961 at a cost of approximately $13,500.

On July 9, 1961, a committee was appointed to build an open shelter, 145' x 150', at the back of the parking lot, which was used for fund-raising and fellowship activities. In 1963, the church reported a membership of 458. On August 22, 1965, the Quarterly Conference authorized the purchase of a lot, 150' x 100', on St. Joseph Street for $6,000 to be used for a parsonage. In 1966 at a called Quarterly Conference, approval was given to purchase another lot, 100' x 150', on St. Joseph Street, and to sell 50' of the south lot.

The 1960's brought forth a bi-weekly church newsletter; planning retreats; steward's visitation books; in-depth Bible studies; spiritual renewal services; sharing groups; clothing for the Blue Ridge Project; dedication of 200 METHODIST HYMNALS; renovation of basement rooms; youth to camps and retreats; first Lay Witness Mission; an active Scouting program; and, participation in city-wide sponsored events. In 1968, the church indebtedness was liquidated.

In 1971, new lights were installed in the fellowship hall, and volunteers panneled the walls. In February of the same year, members left on a building mission team to Angol, Chile. The church had 33 members in college with 7 graduating. On May 6, 1973, "The Jet Set" for retired people was organized, and several days later began selling hot dogs each Wednesday (which is still being done today). In August of the same year, a church bus was purchased by Hoyt Carithers; and, in October, a young adult Sunday School class was organized with 12 members. In 1975, the United Methodist Men sponsored a Cub Scout Troop and a volleyball team; and, in 1976, a new kitchen at the shelter was completed. In 1977, the church began its year financially with a surplus of about $1,000 on a budget of $52,423. In 1977, the Administrative Board approved the project of Needlepoint Kneelers for the altar; and, designated the southeast corner room in the basement as a history and records room. By 1978, the members had contributed $1,051,423.00 to all causes plus thousands of hours of voluntary time in the church and community.

At the end of 1983, the church reported 460 members, and a church school membership of 198. Total assets were $1,030,100; and, a total of $85,226 was paid for all causes during the year.

MEMORIAL - 1948

Memorial Church was founded by the Kannapolis Board of Missions, sponsored by the other Methodist churches in the city, and led by Reverend Cecil G. Hefner, pastor of Trinity Methodist Church. It was established in the newly-developed section of Kannapolis known as "G. I. Town", because of the large number of ex-service men from World War II who lived in the community. A lot at the corner of West "C" Street and Glenn Avenue was purchased from Mr. & Mrs. J. W. Chisholm, two of the charter members. Financial support was given by the various churches participating in the Board of Missions, and individuals in the city.

Groundbreaking ceremonies were held on May 9, 1948 with a former "G. I.", Vincent Huggins and his wife, lifting the first shovelful of earth. Soon the building was under construction with the project capturing the imagination of the entire community.

Because of its unique location and membership, it was felt that the new church should be a memorial to the men who had given their lives in World War II; therefore, the only name ever suggested for the church was "Memorial". In the planning, construction, and organization of the church, many former G. I.'s had a very prominent part as they still do in the affairs of the congregation.

By September, 1948, the basement of the building was ready for use, and Reverend W. B. West, Superintendent of the Salisbury District, preached the first sermon in the new church on September 19. Following the service, the congregation was formally organized with 79 members. The charter was held open until October 31 with a charter membership by then of 111. Retired pastor, Reverend J. P. Hipps, conducted regular services until Reverend E. H. Nease, Jr. was appointed as its first pastor.

The educational building, which was completed in 1966, was added to the original church facilities. A lot and house, which joined the church property, was purchased in 1979, and eventually turned into the church parking lot. Another piece of adjoining property, which is presently being renovated, was purchased in 1983.

At the close of 1983, the church reported 289 members with a church school membership of 148. Total assets were $478,000; and, a total of $49,313 was paid for all causes during the year.

MIDWAY - 1919

Midway Church was the outgrowth of the Kannapolis Charge of the Blue Ridge-Atlantic Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This charge included Mt. Mitchell and Smith's Chapel in the northern part of Cabarrus County, and Oak Grove and Asbury in the Huntersville area of Mecklenburg County. For many years, these four churches were served by the same pastor, who lived in a parsonage in what is now Midway, and traveled to the churches and its members by horseback or by horse and buggy.

At the Annual Conference in the fall of 1918, the following statement was written into the minutes: "Kannapolis, the scene of Brother T. E. Pierce's labors, demands recognition. We must build at once a church at Midway". At that same Conference, Reverend C. M. White was assigned to this charge, and was authorized to organize a new church.

A building was constructed at the location, which is now between the church and fellowship buildings. This was to serve as a meeting place until a permanent church building could be erected, and then converted into a parsonage.

In 1927 under the leadership of Reverend E. H. Spencer, the original building was remodeled into a church, and six Sunday School classrooms were added. Between 1929-1934, a new building was established to take care of the church's growth.

In 1939 with the unification of the three branches of Methodism, Midway was one of the first churches to accept the appointment of a pastor from one of the other uniting denominations due to its closeness in that area. Reverend W. C. Dutton was assigned as pastor, and under his leadership, construction of the present church building was begun on a pay-as-you-go plan. Due to the unavailability of materials and World War II, the building was not completed until 1946 with the dedication service held on March 24, 1946.

In 1947, the church purchased the present parsonage, which is located at 108 Bethpage Road, from Mr. & Mrs. Coy D. Beaver. In 1951, a fellowship building was completed at the corner of South Main Street and Bethpage Road on the lot originally reserved for the church building. In 1966, the sanctuary and educational building was completely remodeled in connection with the new trend of Sunday School education.

In 1983, a garage building was constructed adjoining the fellowship building to house a new church bus purchased in the same year; and, the house and lot at 110 Bethpage Road was purchased from Miss Lois Crowe.

Twenty-two ministers have served the church as pastors, since it was organized; and, seven of its members have gone out into full-time Christian service. The church is well organized with its 530 members, and offers an opportunity to all who wish to serve in the fields of music, teaching, visitation, working with children, youth, and the aged, and in Christian fellowship.

MT. MITCHELL - 1865

The earliest history of Mt. Mitchell Church has come down by word of mouth, the old records having been lost. This tradition says that the church began in 1865 when Old Union Church (Interdenominational) split over the slavery issue. Eight members began meeting in the old Shinn schoolhouse. This group was the nucleus of Mt. Mitchell. Others from the old Union Church organized Mt. Carmel Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and, some others, the New Gilead Reformed Church.

The records of the old Blue Ridge-Atlantic Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church say that Mt. Mitchell was organized on April 12, 1869 with 13 members. Reverend S. A. Roper was the pastor in charge. It is not known how the church got its name unless it was in honor of the Presiding Elder, J. S. Mitchell. However, some of the older members say that they were told by their ancestors that the church came into existence in 1865. This date is strengthened by the fact that when the addition was added to the old church in 1933, the date 1865 was placed on the cornerstone.

The first church was a one-room white frame building, which ran north and south, parallel with the road. The pulpit was located in the north end of the church. Simon Barnhardt, a member of the church, built the chancel rail, altar table, and pulpit. The chancel rail from that church now forms a stair-case in the home of Mrs. C. F. Troutman.

The original membership of the church grew steadily. The roll of 1886, the earliest records, shows that there were 76 members, 33 male and 43 female. The male and female members were listed separately on the roll, with the men

always first, until well after 1900. Records indicate that the men and women sat on different sides of the church; the women on the east side in the "A-women" corner, and the men on the west side in the "A-men" corner. There was no musical instrument in the church until about 1916, when the church acquired a pump organ. The hymns were pitched by a tuning fork used by the leader.

The earliest Sunday School was just one group, adults and children meeting together. Later, the children were separated into one corner of the church, and given small picture cards. If a child collected a certain number of these cards, he could exchange them for a card suitable to hang on the wall of his home.

The church had only day services around 1900, with preaching two Sundays a month, one Sunday in the morning and the other Sunday in the afternoon. The church was then on a circuit of four churches with Old Smith's Chapel (now Midway Church in Kannapolis), Oak Grove, and Asbury Churches in Mecklenburg County.

Due to a steady growth, more Sunday School space was added by 1925; a vestibule and two classrooms were built to the south end of the church. In 1933, the old church was completely remodeled with four more classrooms added, and the exterior of the church building brick-veneered. The building served the congregation until the early 1940's. Plans were drawn for a new plant, and a building fund was begun. However, materials were not available due to the war, then in progress, so construction was delayed.

The present church was built in 1951 at a total cost of $70,000 with the men of the church completing the ground floor. The fellowship building was constructed in 1957 at a cost of $17,000; and, it was dedicated on August 9, 1959 (debt-free).

The church parsonage was at 1308 Lane Street from 1938 until 1963. Two acres of land were purchased on the Old Salisbury Road in July, 1962 for the future construction of a parsonage, which was finished and occupied in November, 1963. The total cost of the building, landscaping, and furnishings was $30,000. The old parsonage was sold, and the congregation borrowed $10,000 to be paid in two years; however, this debt was paid in about one year. Being debt-free, this inspired the growing congregation to go ahead with landscaping and paving on the church lawn. One acre in front of the church, which had been used since the "horse and buggy" days, was closed, and a curbed parking area was paved at the rear of the church.

In 1978, a new three-story educational building wing was added at a cost of $355,000, which is now clear of indebtedness; and, a dedication service was held during the 1980 Homecoming Celebration.

Today, the church is a strong and growing church, carrying on a full program of activities in all departments. The Cross and Flame of the church marker serves as a constant reminder to all who pass, of the commitment to the Risen Lord and His living presence in the world.

NORTH KANNAPOLIS - 1927

In 1927, North Kannapolis Church originated under the sponsorship of

Ann Street Methodist Protestant Church, Concord, North Carolina. Reverend G. H. Hendry, pastor of Ann Street Church, guided a small group of 16 persons to charter "The Methodist Protestant Church of Kannapolis" on June 15, 1927. Meeting first in a tent and next in an arbor, the new congregation completed a building on North Walnut Avenue in 1929 that served the people until 1951.

The present stone church building was constructed in a little over two years. Groundbreaking was held in May, 1949, and the first service was held in the new church on December 9, 1951. Most of the labor for the building was donated by the men of the church, an amount in excess of 30,000 man-hours of work. They were spurred on by their motto, "The difficult we do at once; the impossible takes a little longer". By October 20, 1957, all indebtedness had been liquidated; and, on December 15, 1957, the building was formally dedicated by Bishop Nolan B. Harmon.

In 1959, a stone parsonage, consisting of eight rooms, one and half baths, partial basement and a two-car garage, was built. On November 18, 1962, with indebtedness cleared,it was formally dedicated as "the home of present and future pastors and their families".

For a number of years, the church was identified with having a strong Boy and Girl Scout program. In January 1973, the We Luv'Em Child Care Center was opened with a daily enrollment of approximately fifty children. Choral music is provided by the Chancel and Junior Choirs.

Today the church has an active Youth Fellowship, United Methodist Women with four circles, Methodist Men's Fellowship, and the Jet Setters (retired people). With a membership of 315, there are many program opportunities for persons to be involved in many kinds of activities. The congregation ministers to a wide range of people, helps to meet the needs in the community, and proclaims the Gospel in many ways to those near and far.

ROYAL OAKS - 1956

Royal Oaks Church was born as a result of findings made in the summer of 1956 by the Salisbury District Mission Society. Through a survey made in the Royal Oaks section of Kannapolis, it was found that a Methodist Church was needed in this community.

Announcements were made throughout the community about special services that were to be conducted "tent meeting" style at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Kansas Street, beginning on September 5, 1956. At the conclusion of this first worship service, five persons came forward expressing their desire to be a part of the new congregation. Following the tent service, the Reverend Frank Starnes, who had entered the ministry from Midway Church of Kannapolis, was appointed by the Western North Carolina Conference to serve as pastor of the newly-formed church. To house the congregation on a temporary basis, the Centergrove Community Building was secured, and used until a permanent building could be erected.

On October 21, 1956, the first organizational meeting was held; and, from that point on the congregation began to grow in number. The doors of the church were opened for charter membership until the end of 1958; and, at that time 64 members had joined the church's family.

The next step in the life of the congregation was to purchase property fronting on Kansas and Dakota Streets, the sites of the present church and parsonage. On June 2, 1957, groundbreaking services were held for the construction of a combination sanctuary and educational building. On September 15, 1957, the congregation gathered for the first of many worship services in the newly completed building at a cost of $22,842. (This building currently serves as a fellowship building with three classrooms and the pastor's study). In December, 1959, the building indebtedness for this project was retired. Also in 1959, the first yearly budget totaled $4,164 with the pastor's salary at $85 per month, and utilities at $27 per month.

In June, 1960, Reverend Wade Benson (now deceased) was appointed as minister. In 1962, construction began on a four-bedroom, brick parsonage which fronts on Dakota Street; and, in this same year, Reverend John Pennick was appointed to the church.

In 1964 under the leadership of its pastor, Reverend Terry Hammill, the most ambitious building project in the life of this young church was begun. At an approximate cost of $100,890, construction of the present sanctuary and educational wing was started on May 7, 1967; and, the building was consecrated at the first worship service on February 18, 1968 with a membership of 172.

The value of the land and buildings in 1966 was $57,000; and, the budget in 1968 totaled $11,932 with the pastor's salary at $5,800.

In June, 1972, Reverend Larry Clifton was assigned to the church; and, during his pastorate, the sanctuary and educational wing were fully air-conditioned at a cost of $4,600 with the congregation paying cash for the entire project. In October, 1975, with financial assistance from Duke Endowment, the building indebtedness was retired some three and one-half months ahead of schedule. On March 7, 1976, the formal dedication service was held with Bishop Earl G. Hunt and Reverend Earle Haire, Superintendent of the Salisbury District, participating.

In 1979, the church reported 172 members with a budget of $24,512. The pastor's salary was $10,100, and the value of buildings and furnishings was $387,000.

At the end of 1983, the church reported 198 members with a church school membership of 135. Total assets were $468,267; and, a total of $35,809 was paid for all causes during the year.

TRINITY - 1908

The Methodist Church, South (Trinity) was the first Methodist church organized in Kannapolis. Reverend W. L. Hutchins was assigned as Supply Pastor by the Western North Carolina Conference in 1907. The church was then organized with the first service held in January 1908 in a three-room house (which has since been removed) on Poplar Street near the north end of Cannon Mills No. 5. There were six charter members received in February 1908: A. H. Sides, Augusta Sides, Bettie Sides, Walter Sides, D. A. Sides, and Effie Sides. Also in the same month, a Sunday School was organized with about 25 members under the "management" of A. H. (Daddy) Sides. Late in 1908 the congregation moved to

a hall over the F. L. Smith Drug Store, and services were held there until the YMCA was finished about 1910; and, the "Y" Auditorium was used from 1910-1914. On September 23, 1911, a resolution was approved "to borrow or accept a conditional donation from the Board of Church Extension Methodist Episcopal Church, South not exceeding the sum of $3,000 to build a house of worship". In 1911, J. W. Cannon, founder of Kannapolis, gave to the church a lot on First Street behind the YMCA. Work was started on a brick building, but stopped several times because of lack of funds. In 1913, it became a station church known as the "Kannapolis Station"; and, in 1914, the main auditorium was completed, temporary benches put in, and the first service was held on the fourth Sunday in June by Bishop McMurray. In 1915, a Ladies Aid Society was formed, and a "Girls Class" was organized. In 1916, the Ladies Aid Society gave a pulpit Bible at a cost of $17.50. (This Bible is now in the History Rooms at the church). In February 1918, an Epworth League was organized.

In 1920, the entire indebtedness of $7,000 was paid at which time the church was dedicated and named "Trinity". In 1922, a steam heating plant was installed, choir space enlarged, and other improvements were made. On December 3, 1922, a letter was sent to Cannon Manufacturing Company expressing appreciation "for the beautiful parsonage you turned over to us". On May 13, 1923, approved donating $3,000 "to build a church of brick at Midway". In July 1925, the Sunday Schools started a "special feature of taking on $20.00 a month for Missions". Later on in the same year set aside the fourth Sunday in each month as "Missionary Day", and an offering was taken.

In the fall of 1937, an addition for the church school was built to the church, costing approximately $10,000. The following year Trinity launched a building fund program to build Jackson Park Methodist Church; purchased lots for the new church; helped to organize same church; and, provided the services of its Associate Pastor, Reverend Julian Holmes. In 1939, new pews were put in the auditorium annex at a cost of $916.37. Late in 1939 the young people started a movement for an organ, which resulted in the purchase of a Moller Pipe organ at a cost of $2,656.30, and was dedicated on September 27, 1941. In October 1940, total membership reported was 1,302, and Sunday School membership, 1,042. On November 16, 1941, the note for the church debt was burned during the morning worship service. In the fall of 1943, the Board of Stewards decided to begin raising funds for a parsonage, and $1,500 was put in the budget for this purpose. (When a regular pastor was assigned to Kannapolis, a mill house was then furnished by Cannon Mills Company for a parsonage for about 38 years). Early in 1946 a campaign was launched to raise funds to remodel and enlarge the sanctuary and educational building. The estimated cost was about $65,000, and approximately $45,000 was raised. However, before any work was done, the congregation voted to build a new church at another location in lieu of remodeling. In May 1946, the first parsonage was purchased, which was the A. Z. Price home on North Ridge Avenue for $15,000. On March 23, 1947, the church assumed the support of Reverend William E. Andrews, Missionary to Brazil. During the spring of 1947 under the leadership of Reverend Cecil G. Hefner, plans were begun for an extensive building program. In 1948, liberal aid was furnished to Memorial Church, with records indicating over $10,000.

After the congregation approved a change of location to build a new church on November 9, 1952, ground was broken on East First Street by J. Carlyle Rutledge and members of the congregation on November 30; and, on March 29, 1953, the official cornerstone was laid. In April of the same

year, a Methodist Men's Club was organized and became chartered in August. In December, 1955, the new Trinity Church on East First Street was completed, and the first worship service was held on December 18, 1955. Cost of building was $450,000, and the cost of the lot valued at $65,000. During the next several years, grounds were landscaped; shrubbery and trees were planted; and, a driveway was made circling the building and paved at a cost of $2,000. Also during the 1950's, numerous fund-raising projects were held; special awards were made to the Boy Scout Troop; a new Student Loan Fund was begun; new classes were formed; study groups were held; Unified Budget System of Finance was begun; active participation in training schools; and, many city-wide events were held at the church. On January 15, 1956, open house was held at the new church with approximately 1,000 visitors. On March 14, a church library was approved; and, under the leadership of W. W. Hartsell, a grand opening was held on December 2.

During 1960, the sanctuary and offices were air-conditioned through funds from fifth Sunday walk-ups. In May 1961, a set of Carillon Bells were installed as a memorial to Mrs. Lucille E.White, wife of Dr. Charles D. White (now deceased). Cost of the Bells was $6,909 with one-third paid from memorial funds, and the remainder from fifth Sunday walk-ups. On October 1, 1961, open house was held in the new Scout Center, located behind the church. The Methodist Mens Club took this as a project, and through barbecues for some nine years, raised sufficient funds to build a brick structure at a cost of $14,000. In July, 1963, a lot on Eastwood Drive was purchased for $5,500 to build a new parsonage. In the fall of this year, a Kindergarten program was begun with twenty-four five-year old students (still in progress today). On May 8, 1964, final payment was made on a $180,000 note to erect the church, and dedication services were held on May 17.

The 1970's brought major improvements and additions: the purchasing of a second parsonage at 208 Cliffside Drive for an associate pastor; purchased complete sets in all four liturgical colors of Dossal Curtains and Altar Covers; funds from the Week-Day Kindergarten installed a walk-way cover at the back of the church; new sign on the front lawn of the church; the re-building of the organ at a cost of $8,000; Needlepoint Kneelers made by the women; a 12-passenger van given by Mr. & Mrs. Henry Fisher; Methodist Men's Club project of building a garage to the present Scout Hut, which was completed in March, 1978; and, participation of its members on Conference Building Teams.

On March 6,1982, the twenty-sixth annual barbecue was held; and, on May 1-2, the United Methodist Men's Fellowship received the first Outstanding Fellowship Banner at Lake Junaluska. On May 19, the first meeting of the Trinity's Historical Committee was held for the purpose of preserving historical items, which resulted in the renovation of two unused Church School classrooms for its History Rooms. The relocation of the old historical church bell to the front lawn was undertaken by the Friendship Bible Class, which was completed in June 1982. On May 23, a thirty-six octave set of Schulmerich Handbells were dedicated in memory of Robert Parker Hartsell, which was given by his family. In January, 1983, the church celebrated its Seventy-Fifth Anniversary (DIAMOND JUBILEE) with special services every Sunday and Wednesday evenings with former pastors and sons of the church participated; a Wesley Hymn Sing; a musical program of the 1920's; homecoming; audio-visuals; and, the formal opening of the church's history rooms.

Trinity's roots go deep in the lives of those it has touched through its outreach endeavors; its missionary visions; its evangelistic thrusts; and, its willingness to serve the people in the community. These persons have gone out

from the church into the ministry: J. C. Brown, J. Edgar Cochran, R. F. Gardner, D. P. Grant, R. C. Griffith, M. C. Henderson, Sr., John W. Hoyle, III, C. H. Moser, George W. Rudisill, W. C. Sides, Jr., Jack C. Smith, Philip Widenhouse, Clarence E. Williams, Harley M. Williams, N. C. Williams, Jr., Wade H. Curran, Jr., Eugene Simpson, John M. Rufty, William H. Faggart, and Charles Denny White, Jr.

LANDIS: FIRST - 1903

In the early 1900's, there was not a church in Landis; so, the Methodist Church became the Mother Church of this small town. Mt. Zion Reformed and Lutheran Chapel (both near China Grove) were the closest churches. With no way to travel except by walking, some of the good citizens who attended Mt. Zion, helped start an afternoon church. Mrs. Calvin W. (Fannie) Corriher said the first meetings were held in a small building known as "The Old Post Office".

In 1903, plans were made to build a church; and, the deed, which was signed by J. O. Lipe and A. J. Deal as treasurer, stated that in 1904 the sum of $100 was paid Linn Mills Company for one-half acre of land on Mill Street. Dr. Calvin W. Corriher was largely responsible for building the church. Volunteer carpenters did the work, and when they run out of materials, work had to stop until some of Dr. Corriher's patients paid him; and, then he would buy more nails and lumber, so that work could continue on the church. It was 1905 before the small frame building was completed, which consisted of one large room plus a little bell tower room in which small children in the "card" class met. All the other classes were scattered throughout the one room building. The pews and altar rail were homemade, and an organ was donated, which was played by Eula Davidson, who was thirteen years old.

The first trustees were C. W. Walker, H. J. Walker, and Calvin W. Corriher. The Walkers' were brothers of "Uncle" Joe Walker, who for years run the church almost singlehanded. He rang the bell, built the fires in the big pot-bellied stove, cleaned the church, ordered the literature, took the offering, and kept all the books. In 1934, as "Uncle" Joe became more frail, these duties fell to Clifford Dial, who carried them out faithfully until the old church was torn down.

In 1904, Reverend A. L. Aycock was pastor of the China Grove Methodist Episcopal Church South Circuit; so, Landis was added to his pastorate. Some of the early members included The Walkers', The Beavers', the Corrells', and The Hinsons'.

No one seemed positive about the date, but around 1912 Landis was grouped with several other churches to form the Landis Charge, which consisted of Oak Grove, Unity, Bethpage, Shiloh, and Landis. Word of mouth indicated that, since Landis Church was the only one with electric lights, it had night services every Sunday except the first Sunday in each month. On that Sunday, services were held at 11 o'clock; and, this schedule was maintained through 1923.

In 1938, the church became a three-point charge with Oak Grove and Unity. Under the leadership of Reverend Clegg Avett, the three churches built a parsonage near Oak Grove. Prior to the building of this parsonage, the pastors

of Landis lived in their own homes (Thomasville, Stanfield, Concord), and traveled to the church each Sunday.

In 1952, an educational unit was built with its pastor, Reverend R. G. McClamrock, a gifted carpenter, helping with the construction. Members of the church and community participated in fund-raising events. In 1955, Landis became a station church, and also purchased a parsonage on South Chapel Street.

In 1962, a new sanctuary was built under the leadership of Reverend Hubert Brown; and, in 1966, the debt was paid, and the mortgage burned. Almost immediately plans were started to build a new parsonage, which was completed in 1967, and located on West Ridge Avenue in Landis. In 1973, the debt was paid, and a dedication service was held in the spring of 1974.

The bell tower, which houses the original bell from the first church, was constructed in 1980 with the help of the Methodist Men. It was dedicated to the memory of "Uncle" Joe Walker, Mrs. C. W. Corriher, and Clifford Dial. A ramp for the handicapped was added to the church in 1981. Two ministers have gone out from the church; namely, Pressley Rutledge and Roy Sides.

At the end of 1983, the church reported 228 members, and a church school membership of 117. Total assets were $328,000; and, a total of $67,592 was paid for all causes during the year.

LIBERTY-BETHEL

LIBERTY - 1835

Liberty Church was organized in 1835 when several members from St. Matthews Lutheran Church decided to build a church of another denomination. Billy Canup and a Mr. Cranford organized a log cabin church located nearly a mile and two-tenths northwest of what is now Liberty Cross Roads.

The church had not been organized long when the two disagreed upon something, and Mr. Cranford said, "You are at 'Liberty' to do as you wish", thus giving the church its name. Mr. Cranford organized the Providence Methodist Church, and Mr. Canup moved into a crude building about four miles south of Liberty Cross Roads. Water was supplied by a spring near the meeting place.

The oldest date mentioned in the records was August 15, 1836. At this time, it was called "The Society of Liberty Methodists", and consisted of 10 males and 22 females. In 1938, the Presiding Elder was David Derick, and names recorded were The Porters', The Hills', and The Peelers".

Most of the meetings held were quarterly. By 1869, the name of the church was changed to the Methodist East Rowan Circuit; and, by 1874, it was changed to the Salisbury District. In 1876 through 1881, the members worked on a new church building, which was located at the Liberty Cross Roads, and dedicated in 1882. In 1879, the average collection per person was 60¢. In 1882, records indicate that the congregation was not "very active". The requirements of the church were very strict. One had to attend church regularly. One could not drink or commit adultery. Charges were applied to violaters, and they were usually excommunicated from the church for these acts.

Near the turn of the century, the church members gained interest in prayer meetings and supported missions, but would have nothing to do with the literature distributed. At the turn of the century, Liberty Methodist Episcopal Church, South was located where the present educational building stands. It was a white wooden structure, and benches used then still remain in the balcony of the present church.

In the late 1920's and the early 1930's, Liberty was on a five point charge with Rockwell, Gold Hill, Wesley Chapel, and Zion. In the 1930's, Wesley Chapel and Zion were removed with Bethlehem being added, leaving a four point charge, consisting of Rockwell, Gold Hill, Bethlehem, and Liberty. In 1928, Liberty reported a membership of 134.

The present church building was begun in 1927, and dedicated on April 4, 1929. In 1954, a new addition was added to the church, which included two Sunday School classrooms and bathrooms. On March 9, 1958, a perpetual trust fund for the upkeep and care of the cemetery was begun, and was completed on March 5, 1968 with a value at that time of $10,000. The interest was to be used only for the upkeep of the cemetery.

On November 5, 1960, an educational building fund was started. The groundbreaking was held on June 19, 1964, and the building was dedicated on November 27, 1966 at a total cost of $57,664.25. In June, 1961, Liberty and Rockwell was taken from the four point charge, and placed on a two point charge under the title of the Rockwell-Liberty Charge. This two point work began with the Reverend C. Eugene Simpson. Members first rented a house in front of Dr. Oliver's office. Later Rockwell purchased a parsonage located on Highway 52 in Rockwell. In 1961, there were 150 members at Liberty.

In June, 1970, Liberty became a station church with Reverend William Cockman as pastor. A mobile home was purchased and placed at the back of the church to be used as a parsonage until one could be built. Due to ill health, Reverend Cockman retired in November, 1970. Groundbreaking for the new parsonage was in the fall of 1972. Open house was held on August 12, 1973, and the appraised cost of the parsonage was $65,000. On December 2, 1973, Reverend Carl Lain administered the oath of lay minister to Bobby Gilland, Johnny Trexler, Mrs. Bonnie Hill, and Mrs. Becky Peacock. In 1974, there were 229 members.

At the close of 1983, the church reported 202 members with a church school membership of 164. Total assets were $400,000; and, a total of $30,597 was paid for all causes during the year.

BETHEL - 1884

Bethel Church was founded in 1884, and the first church, which was a wooden building, was located near the cemetery. The present building was constructed in 1949 on land given to the church by Duke Power Company. The current building on Longferry Road east of Salisbury is now located about one mile west of its original site.

The present membership is 145 with approximately 80% of the congregation retirees, and church school membership is 58. At the end of 1983, total assets were $250,000; and, $20,658 was paid for all causes.

MATTON'S GROVE-ZION

MATTON'S GROVE - 1869

Matton's Grove was founded in 1869 with its first worship service conducted under a brush arbor. Later a tent-type structure with open sides was used for worship. Camp meetings were held, and cabins were available for the people, who desired to stay during the entire series of meetings.

The wood-framed church was first used in 1898. It was built on land donated by Goright and Leddie Noah Selle; and, the church was named for a prominent Presiding Elder by the name of G. W. Matton, who was born in Hereford, England.

On January 26, 1975, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the new church, and the first service was on February 15, 1976. The following persons were 'first' in the new church: first baptized: Shelly Huneycutt on August 7, 1977; first members: Cindy Misenheimer, Marty Misenheimer, Monte Williams, Bobby Baker and Kelley Baker on August 15, 1976; first couple married: Wanda Almond and Junior Fink on June 12, 1977; first funeral: Mollie Shoe Howell on September 21, 1976.

In 1983, the church reported a membership of 144 with a church school membership of 146. Total assets were $310,000; and, a total of $32,909 was paid for all causes.

ZION - 1845

The first history of what is now Zion United Methodist Church is buried in tradition of early pioneer days and cannot be ascertained; but, it is known that more than a century ago, the Methodist people of that community realized the need of a place to worship God. Tradition indicates that the church had its beginning under a brush arbor. For a time, the Methodists met with or alternated with the other denominations at the Piny Woods community meeting house. Then the time came to build a church of their own. A log structure was erected on the plantation of Alexander Shaver, not far from the present site, and was called Walnut Grove, perhaps signifying the place of origin under the brush arbor.

The earliest available record of membership was in April 1845 when Isaac M. Shaver was received by vows by the Reverend Daniel McDonald; however, word of mouth indicated an organization of members before this time. Mr. Shaver became a Local Elder, and served the community in preaching, performing marriages and baptizing. A large pulpit Bible, which the church has today, was presented to Walnut Grove Church on October 18, 1856 by David Shaver.

The name was changed to Zion Church, and a deed dated September 20, 1879 was made by Alexander Shaver for a tract of land lying on the Stokes Ferry Road to the following trustees: V. Mauney, I. M. Shaver, W. H. Smith, I. C. Bell, I. A. Lilly, J. F. Parker, and L. F. Shankle. A new frame building was erected on this lot, which served for more than a quarter of a century. The church's records state that "the first session of the church conference for Zion Church, Albemarle Circuit, North Carolina Conference, Methodist Episcopal

Church, South, was held at Zion on April 15, 1888, J. C. Rowe, P. C. in the chair". W. A. Kirk, superintendent, reported that "the Sunday School is in a prosperous condition". Members do not know the earliest date of the Sunday School, but the church has literature dated May 1887.

In November, 1891 at the Annual Conference in Asheville, North Carolina, the Gold Hill Circuit was "set off", and Zion became a part of that circuit. In 1912 at its first Quarterly Conference, a committee, consisting of W. A. Kirk, I. C. Shaver, E. C. Shaver, George Fraley, Charlie Fraley, James Whitley, and Charlie Thompson, was appointed to investigate whether to repair the old building or to build a new church. It was decided to build on the same grounds, and the first service was held on September 14, 1913. This building served many years,before it was decided that a new structure was needed.

A building committee was appointed, and with a membership of 82, a building fund was begun, and so was the building, which was of brick. With $3,000 in the treasury and a lot of faith, ground was broken on February 22, 1959 for the fourth building in the history of this church. With the splendid cooperation and hard work of members and friends of the church, the first worship service in the new sanctuary was held on December 13, 1959. A new lot just to the south of the old church was donated by Henry Surratt. Much of the material and labor was donated, and the cost of the building was estimated at $45,000. The indebtedness was fully paid by June 15, 1960, and a homecoming service was held on July 10, 1960 with a picnic dinner on the grounds.

Zion Church has produced four ministers: Isaac M. Shaver, John F. Kirk, R. Adolphus Taylor, and Isaac Leroy Shaver, who served as a missionary to Japan for 40 years. Also two minister's wives have gone out from the church: Carrie Shaver Pyatt and Ada Shaver Wise, wife of a former pastor of this church. There may have been others not recorded.

Some of the family names of early membership included Basinger, Cotton, Doby, Eagle, Fraley, Fry, Goodman, Hartman, Hill, Kepley, Kirk, Lisk, Miller, Parker, Shaver, Taylor, and Williams. The church's present membership includes many descendants of these early members.

At the end of 1983, the church reported a membership of 75 with a church school membership of 44. Total assets were $155,000; and a total of $11,555 was paid for all causes. Members of the present Zion Church is proud to be a part of this long and established history. May Zion's bell toll for many more years as it continues to reach out and serve the community.

MILL GROVE-PINE BLUFF

MILL GROVE - 1877

Mill Grove Methodist Protestant Church was organized in 1877 by the Reverend Hubert W. Peeples. Persons involved in the organization of the church were Henry Garmon, Mike Garmon, Martin Furr, Jacob Hartsell, and others.

For several years, brush arbors was the main house of worship until a small building was erected. Mill Grove was famous for its camp meetings, so a large arbor was built to use for this purpose. The arbor was soon circled with huts for people to live in while attending these camp meetings.

In the year of 1937, a new brick building was constructed with Sunday School classrooms in the basement. Prior to unification in 1939, the following pastors have served Mill Grove Church: Hubert Peeples, Lineberry (given name unknown), T. F. McCullough, I. I. York, F. A. Sides, D. A. Braswell, J. S. Dunn, G. H. Austin, Lassiter (given name unknown), E. A. Plyler, Dosier (given name unknown), H. S. B. Thompson, R. L. Clinton, E. G. Lowdermilk, G. L. Reynolds, Alexander (given name unknown), J. W. Hulin, F. R. Love, W. D. Reed, J. H. Trolinger, and Earl A. Cook.

In 1959, the old arbor was razed as it needed repairs. The present church has air-conditioning, and is equipped with a loud speaker system. At the close of 1983, the church reported a membership of 118 and a church school membership of 47. Total assets were $210,000; and, a total of $17,508 was paid for all causes.

PINE BLUFF - 1913

Pine Bluff Church was first organized as a Sunday School in 1913 by Mrs. Amanda Tucker, Mr. Charlie Misenheimer, and Mr. Stalin Moore. The Pine Bluff School building was used as the first meeting place. Worship services were begun in 1914 by the Reverend D. A. Braswell.

In 1919, the Pine Bluff Church was admitted to the North Carolina Methodist Protestant Conference; and, in 1921, the first church building was constructed.

In 1936, two Sunday School rooms were added, and in 1946, the interior of the church was remodeled. The church was brick-veneered in 1966.

On August 17, 1975, lightning struck the steeple, and completely destroyed the sanctuary. The new sanctuary was started in March 1976, and the first services were held in the new church on November 14, 1976.

At the end of 1983, the church reported a membership of 66 with a church school membership of 64. Total assets were $224,895; and, a total of $14,505 was paid for all causes.

MOUNT OLIVET - 1815

Mt. Olivet Church lies secure among its oaks as it has for almost two centuries on the ridge lying to the west of Three Mile Branch, as it meanders to its junction with Great Cold Water Creek. To the west of the present sanctuary is an ancient cemetery, where simple slate markers show the final resting places for two couples whose stories are closely bound to the early history of the church: George Rogers and his wife, Martha; and, John Rogers and his wife, also named Martha.

On May 5, 1815, the Sugar Creek Circuit was organized in a meeting at Bethel Church in southern Cabarrus County to serve the areas of Mecklenburg,

Cabarrus, Montgomery (including present Stanly County), and Iredell Counties. The Sugar Creek Circuit was part of the Catawba District of the South Carolina Conference.

Rogers Meeting House is listed as a preaching place in the first minutes of the new Circuit on May 5, 1815. This is the first documented mention of the church, which was to become known as Mt. Olivet. The first stone in the cemetery is dated 1816. John Rogers must have been a leading figure in the early church as he was elected Steward at the Quarterly Conference held at Rogers Church on July 27, 1816. Records of the Sugar Creek Circuit revealed that Quarterly Conferences were held at Rogers Church on August 14, 1818, October 16, 1819, May 12, 1820, _____, 1821, July 30, 1825, and June 16, 1832.

The presence and location of the first church buildings in the vicinity of the present parsonage is also confirmed by deeds made in 1830, when John Rogers swapped 13 acres of land with his neighbor, John Phifer, to straighten their common boundary line. One of the lines was described as crossing Three Mile Branch, and running South to the "Meeting House".

Rogers Church continued to be an important part of Sugar Creek Circuit, whose name was changed to Charlotte Circuit in 1834. However, the area experienced such growth that the ministers were not able to serve the multi-county area. On March 18, 1843, the following entry was made in the Charlotte Circuit Minutes: "Resolved that the following preaching places be dropped, viz. Mt. Dows, Ormans, Wilefords and Pisga and that the preachers of Center Circuit be solicited to take Rogers and Old Bethpage and that the Charlotte Circuit be reduced to a three weeks circuit".

From 1844 through 1846, Rogers joined the Center Circuit in the Cheraw District, when the Concord Circuit of the Lincolnton District was formed. Although there are some gaps in the records at this point, all indications are that Rogers Church was a part of the Concord Circuit from 1847 to 1852. In 1853, the Charlotte District was formed, and the Concord Circuit, including Rogers Church, transferred to it.

In 1851, John Rogers decided to transfer title to the meeting house land to the Methodist Church. By deed dated June 27, 1851, he transferred a tract of one and one-quarter acres to Daniel Dry, J. L. Bundy, and other Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to "use and occupy the said tract of land as a place of stated preaching", but withholding the power of sale from the Trustees, so that the land "shall remain as a place of worship for the Methodist denomination to be used for that purpose and that purpose alone forever". The land granted was the area where the parsonage is presently located, and is the same area where the log churches were located. Before the deed was presented for registration on May 7, 1856, additional trustees had to be elected, the number being insufficient: Roger Daywalt (Dayvault), Levi Fink, Daniel Litaker, and Nicholas Cook were elected by the congregation.

By 1858, Samuel Murph had replaced Levi Fink as a Trustee, as evidenced by the second John Rogers deed dated September 4, 1858. He conveyed about three acres to the Trustees, which included the original one and one-quarter acre tract. The additional area included part of the present cemetery and sanctuary areas. Again, the deed stated that the land was not to be sold

but was to remain as a "place of public worship for the Methodist Community.... forever". Later, small grants from Reverend G. W. Vick and Dayvault Enterprises, Inc., brought the church property to its present extent of 4.217 acres.

A newspaper article helped to identify Rogers' neighboring churches on the Concord Circuit, because of a bad winter in 1855-1856. Reverend Jacob L. Shuford, who was assigned to the Concord Circuit for 1856, ran a notice in the CONCORD GAZETTE on February 12, 1856, explaining that the inclement weather had prevented his keeping all scheduled appointments, and he published a complete list of expected worship services, which read as follows: "APPOINTMENTS: Rev. J. L. Shuford, Methodist Minister on this circuit, requests us to announce the following appointments for him on the circuit, as owing to the late bad weather he failed to meet many of the appointments on his last round: Sunday, February 17th, Concord; Thursday, February 21, Union; Friday, February 22, Rogers; Saturday, February 23, Mount Pleasant; Sunday, February 24, Emory at 11 A.M.; Sunday, February 24, Gold Hill at 3 P.M.; Wednesday, February 27, Mount Moriah; Thursday, February 28, Love's Chapel; Friday, February 29, Asberry; Saturday, March 1, Smith's Sc. House; Sunday, March 2, Union at 11 A.M.; Sunday, March 2nd, Concord at night".

Documentation of the name changed to Mt. Olivet was first found in BRANSON'S NORTH CAROLINA BUSINESS DIRECTORY FOR 1877-1878, under a listing of churches for Cabarrus County. No one was certain when the change was first made, but it was probably after the death of John Rogers, who died in Concord on July 23, 1864.

There were five churches on the Concord Circuit in 1884 when good records began to be kept: Mt. Olivet, Union, Center, Rocky Ridge, and Bethpage. The Circuit was then in the Salisbury District, and had been since 1881. Bethpage was replaced by St. Matthews later that year. In 1884, Union and St. Matthews united to form Mt. Carmel.

In 1902, Boger's Chapel joined the four churches on the Circuit. Although Center was listed on the Circuit in January, 1910, it was not included thereafter. Mt. Olivet continued to grow during that time. In addition to an active Sunday School, an Epworth League was meeting in 1904, and was termed in "very good working order". By 1907, there were both Senior and Junior Epworth Leagues.

1914 was a landmark year for Mt. Olivet. A growing congregation began to dream of a modern sanctuary to replace the frame structure still in use. A building committee, composed of C. J. Goodman, H. A. Scott, and A. W. Winecoff, was appointed at the Quarterly Conference on April 25. By June, 1915, the work had been completed, and the Trustees were authorized to sell the old building, and apply the proceeds on the new church.

By 1934, Concord Circuit had been reduced to three churches: Mt. Olivet, Mt. Carmel, and Rocky Ridge. On April 4, 1937 at its Quarterly Conference meeting, a building committee for a parsonage for Mt. Olivet was elected. A committee was also elected for Rocky Ridge. At a meeting held on September 14, 1937, it was noted that the parsonage at Mt. Olivet was completed, and that Reverend Randall had been living in it for ten days. The minutes further reflect that the Rocky Ridge-Mt. Carmel parsonage was scheduled to be completed by Christmas. Mt. Olivet was entering into a new period of growth and leadership as a station church.

In 1939, a Uniting Conference was held in Greensboro for delegates from the Western North Carolina Conference; and, C. J. Goodman attended this conference meeting as a lay delegate from Mt. Olivet. At this time, the church had a membership of 350, including local preachers. The church building was valued at $20,000; the parsonage at $4,700; and, other property at $600, with no debt.

A recreation hall was finished in March of 1947, and dedicated in honor of the men and women, who served in World War II. In 1951-1952, an educational building was added to the sanctuary at a cost of $55,000, which was dedicated at a note-burning ceremony in 1956.

In 1965, another education building was added at a cost of $70,000, and occupied on January 5, 1966. A gift from the Goodman family in honor of Caleb Jackson Goodman was used to retire the indebtedness on the building, which housed the study and church office, along with classrooms for the children.

In 1969, the church, fellowship building, and the parsonage were air-conditioned; a well was drilled; and, the parking and driveway areas were paved. A Memorial Hall was completed in 1976, and dedicated on March 11, 1979 with Bishop L. Scott Allen, officiating.

In 1984, the interior of the sanctuary was painted, and extensive roof repairs carried out. A modern sound system, with taping capabilities, has been authorized by the Administrative Board and Trustees for the sanctuary. The congregation of some 240 families is presently under the leadership of Reverend Benjamin F. Wilson, and is actively planning for its next two centuries of leadership and service to its community and its Savior.

Those, who have gone forth to serve as ministers from Mt. Olivet are Thomas E. Winecoff, Milton Litaker, Clarence Williams, Fred Shinn, and Leroy A. Scott.

MOUNT PLEASANT - 1848

The United Methodist Church of Mt. Pleasant is a well-known landmark in the community. The oldest deed of land dates back to September 17, 1847; but, it is believed that a church was organized earlier, possibly in the early 1800's. The land, which was one acre and 103 poles, was purchased from Jacob Ludwig for the sum of $8.12½. A small wooden structure was erected somewhere near the sight of the present church.

A number of negro slaves, whose graves are marked with plain stones from the fields, are buried just across the road from the present church. This cemetery is believed to be the first in the community, and these graves are in the oldest section.

According to records, the present building was the fifth to be erected by the Methodists. Many residents of the town remember at least three of them, and reported that the third building was torn away just before the turn of the century. Two houses, which are still in use, were made from the third church. These houses are now owned and occupied by Mrs. Ben McAllister, and Mr. and

Mrs. Mike Block. The fourth building was made of bricks from native clay. Clifford Tucker, a member of the congregation, made a great many of them in hand molds in the "old Tucker brick yard" located on Buffalo Creek just north of the old Barrier Mill.

Due to the church's growth, the old building became inadequate. So in 1941, during the pastorate of the Reverend H. L. Creech, plans were begun for a new church, and pledges were accepted immediately. However, due to a shortage of materials and other difficulties that arose during World War II, the building was delayed until 1948, while the Reverend Clegg W. Avett was pastor.

At one time, both funds and materials were so scarce that it seemed impossible to proceed with the project; so, a recommendation was made to the congregation that the building program be delayed for a period of time. The people became disturbed at the idea of giving up a church that was so badly needed; so, they rejected the recommendation and voted to continue with the building of a new church. Another drive was made, and everyone pledged more money.

Along with funds from the Board of Missions and Duke Endowment, the building was completed in 1949 at a total cost of $62,000. The first service was held on August 21, 1949; and, in 1952, the old building was sold and torn down. When the final debt was paid, the church had its Dedication Service on Sunday, July 5, 1953 with Bishop Costen J. Harrell presiding.

At one time, the church was part of a charge of five churches with Center Grove, St. Paul, Cold Springs, Friendship, and Mt. Pleasant. The pastor lived in a parsonage at Mt. Pleasant. As time progressed, these churches either merged or became station churches. Mt. Pleasant became a station church in 1960; and, in October of the same year, a parsonage was built and ready for use by the Reverend and Mrs. Bill Bigham and family.

At the end of 1983, the church reported a membership of 251 with a church school membership of 125. Total assets were $560,850; and, a total of $46,480 was paid for all causes during the year.

MOUNT TABOR - 1847

Originally known as Lebanon Methodist Church, Mount Tabor has a historic background. Services were first held in a brush arbor located between Ellis Cross Roads and Franklin. This tract of land contained two acres, and was bought for the sum of one dollar. The tract began at a corner of David Pinkston's property, and joined the property of David Weant and George Swink. This property is now owned by Henry Shuping. The cemetery of "Old Lebanon" is also on this property.

The land for old Lebanon Church was purchased on November 6, 1847. Trustees were George Swink, James Ford, William A. Smith, William Butner, John McRary, R. Darby, William Overman, and William Ronzes. A log building was erected, and later frame work was added.

At one time,a disagreement over the sum of money the minister was to be paid resulted in the locking of the church door; and, the minister held the

services on the steps of the church for sometime. Another disagreement resulted in the moving of the church to the present location on the Old Mocksville Road. This property was purchased for the sum of $65 from Carolina Chunn and her husband. Containing four and nine-tenths acres, it joined the Pennington and Hartley corners.

The church building was begun in 1874. John Swicegood, father of Judge Ira Swicegood, and Mr. Shaw were the carpenters. The late Miss Sallie Chunn gave the church the name of Mount Tabor, because of its location on a knoll. Miss Chunn also raised the necessary funds for a Bible, communion set, and carpet by asking friends for donations.

According to Miss Chunn, the first pastor was the Reverend Stevenson; and, first members were George Koon, Richard Walker, Dr. M. L. Chunn, J. A. Hudson, Peter L. Monroe, D. Pennington, and families.

The first wedding performed was that of Miss Sarah Monroe and Ashby Miller.

Mount Tabor is indeed founded in a rich history of human experience, and a vast tradition grounded in the Wesleyan spirit. On November 6, 1982, the church celebrated its 135th birthday. At the close of 1983, the church reported a membership of 189 and a church school membership of 129. Total assets were $345,000; and, a total of $48,394 paid for all causes.

PROVIDENCE - 1838

Providence Church was founded in 1838. Religious meetings for the community were held on this tract of land, and were called camp meetings. The meetings, which would last for two weeks to a month, were held two to three times a year; and, entire families would come with household necessities and livestock to sustain them. If they so desired, anyone could preach or speak on religious convictions. As attendance grew, it became apparent that a shelter was needed. A brush arbor was constructed out of hand made blocks for the walls, and the roof was comprised of underbrush and bushes.

The first sanctuary had a waist high partition from the pulpit to the front door. The men and women entered and sat on separate sides of the church. When the first building became delapidated and too small, it was sold to Rufus A. Eller, who constructed a barn from the material.

In 1904, the second sanctuary, which was much larger, was constructed on practically the same site. When the second building outlived its usefulness, it was sold to Joseph Arey, who used the material to construct a home. Thus the third sanctuary, which is now in use, was built in 1939. This building program took place in stages - with the portion that is now the pastor's study, and two Sunday School classes, being built first. This section was used for all church activities until the main sanctuary could be completed. Some of the old pews from the second church are still being utilized in the present building. The right wing of the church, beginning beside the pastor's office, was constructed in 1952. The hut or fellowship building was built in 1956, mainly with volunteer labor and materials.

During the 1940's and early 1950's, the church shared the minister with

several other area churches; and, preaching was held every other Sunday at different hours. As congregations grew, other churches requested and supported full time ministers, leaving Providence and Bethel sharing a minister until 1978. In June, 1978, Providence became a station church with a full time pastor, who was the Reverend E. D. Cantor, Jr.

At the end of 1983, the church reported a membership of 348 with a church school membership of 266. Total assets were $378,000; and, a total of $63,305 was paid for all causes. The Reverend Benny T. Myers is the present minister.

ROBERTA - 1906

In the fall of 1906, the Reverend D. A. Braswell, pastor of the Concord Methodist Protestant Church, assisted by the Reverend J. E. McSwain, held a very successful revival in a large tent near the Roberta Mill,and more than 250 people were converted. At the close of this revival, Fairview Methodist Protestant Church was organized. Those helping with the organization of the church were Mr. & Mrs. John Foster, Mr. & Mrs. Calvin Garmon, Mr. & Mrs. John Garmon, Mr. & Mrs. Hoke McCall, and Mr. Jim Linker.

The congregation first worshipped at the Presbyterian Church until its new church building was erected the following year. In the spring of 1907, a building committee was appointed; a plot of ground was purchased; and, the erection of the church, a frame building, soon began. During the same year on this plot of ground, another great revival was held under a brush arbor, and many people were converted and added to the church roll. The names of John Foster, Hoke McCall, and John Kiser appeared on the deed as the first Trustees of the church property.

In 1919, the name of the church was changed from Fairview to Roberta, and the church became a station the same year. In the early years, Fairview was on a charge with Ann Street.

During the pastorate of the Reverend Robert Short from 1927-1930, eight large classrooms were added to the church; and, on April 1, 1934, the final payment of $725.00 was made, and the church was debt free again during the pastorate of the Reverend Earl Cook.

A building fund program was started on March 22, 1948 under the guidance of the late Z. D. Cochran, then Sunday School Superintendent. On February 1, 1953, the first service was held in the basement of the new church building, and the opening service was on April 26, 1953. Total cost of the structure including the fixtures was approximately $75,000. Dedication service was held on March 25, 1956 with Bishop Costen J. Harrell. The fellowship building was constructed in 1959.

The first parsonage was built on the ground where the tent stood for the first revival in 1906. This property was sold in 1946 with the present parsonage completed in the spring of 1963.

The church reported a membership of 284 with a church school membership of 144 in 1983. Total assets were $625,000; and, a total of $71,733 was paid for all causes during this same year.

ROCK GROVE - 1887

In 1887 while the circuit riding preacher, Reverend A. L. Coburn, was visiting his friend in this section of the county, he saw their need and desire for a place of worship. He promised his support to help establish a church in this area if the local people would clear some land and work with him. Mr. and Mrs. James Ludwick took the first step, and sold a two-acre tract of land for $1.00 to be used for the construction of a new church. The land was cleared, and crude slab benches were built under the trees in the grove. When the weather was bad, the little group was forced to meet in an old nearby shop.

A society of 10 people was formed, and plans began to grow. Reverend Coburn, working with three white men and one black, began the actual construction in January of 1889. The one-room wooden building measured 20' x 40', and was completed and paid for in the same year. For his faithful service and hard work, Reverend Coburn received $2.90 in cash, and a one-horse load of pumpkins. At this time, the congregation had about 20 members. It was named Rock Grove Methodist Church, because of the many rocks surrounding it; and, the grove of trees where it was built. Also at this time, it was added to the South Salisbury District, and the North Carolina Conference. The first trustees were R. W. Gant, S. G. Shuping, and Jacob Holshouser.

In those early years, the Sunday School classes for the children would meet outside on the rocks, when weather permitted, and continued to do so until the current structure was ready for use. During the World War II years, Pete Kluttz owned a bus that transported mill workers to work; and, he would bring people to church on Sundays in his bus. From time to time, when the weather was so bad, it became necessary for some classes to meet on the bus. Other classes would meet in the yard, on the porch, or in the living room of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Overcash, who lived nearby. They were nice enough to permit this, even though they were not members of the church at that time.

Very little church history was actually recorded for a number of years. There was an old organ in the church, but many Sundays there was no music for lack of someone to play it. In 1939, when Reverend Ross became the pastor, he would bring Billy Burke from Salisbury to play the organ. It was also during this period that Clyde Robinson and Tom Deese began singing and using stringed instruments.

In 1940, Reverend Wade Bustle came to serve the small, but steadily growing church. During his pastorate, the first Bible School was held with 29 children and teachers attending. Also during his term, the first Women's Missionary Society was organized. The group first began meeting at the home of Mrs. Banks Josey with Mrs. Carl King helping to organize. Some of the earliest members were Ellen Earnhardt, Mrs. Josey, Maude Kluttz, Mrs. W. C. Lazenby, Vada Earnhardt, Gladys Baily, Minnie Basinger, Julie Johnson, and Fern Ward. Reverend H. L. Blackwelder came to Rock Grove in 1943, and the congregation began to outgrow the little one-room church. Under his leadership and the hard work of faithful members, a dream of a new church became a reality. When Reverend Rogers was assigned there in 1949, the church, though not completely finished, was in use. It was during his ministry that the church was completed, and the debt liquidated.

Once again the ever-growing congregation stepped out in faith and began working on a parsonage; so, in 1955, the Reverend Ray Moss and his family were the first to live in the church's new parsonage. During the remaining 1950's and 1960's, there were many projects undertaken. The basement rooms were finished with new floor coverings; rooms on the third floor were completed; new steps built to the front; a new roof added; and, a steeple erected for the church. The balcony was finished and carpet installed. Walkways were poured and the driveways were paved. When Reverend Gregory was assigned to the church in 1966, plans were underway to build a new fellowship hall. A groundbreaking service was held in October 1967; and, before Reverend Gregory moved, the building was completed, paid for, and a mortgage burning service was held in August of 1970.

With the church, the parsonage, and the fellowship building completed and paid for, the members can look back now at its humble beginning, and truly thank God for his blessings over the years. It took a lot of faith in God, and a lot of hard work for God's work to be accomplished out of a simple grove of trees and rocks.

ROCKWELL - 1924

In 1921, a group from Gold Hill Methodist Church came to Rockwell and held church services upstairs at the George E. Brown Funeral Home. About 1922, Reverend Sharpe held a two-week tent revival on Cherry Street in Rockwell. During this revival, money was raised, and a lot was given to build a Methodist Church.

The church was constructed by the men of the church and a local carpenter during the years of 1923 and 1924. The first service held in the new church on Cherry Street was in February 1924, and the Reverend Frank Stough was pastor with 20 charter members. For many years, the church was on the Gold Hill Charge.

Later the church was relocated on East Main Street, and the first service in this location was March 30, 1969. For a number of years, it was known as the Rockwell-Liberty Charge. The Rockwell Church has been a station church for about 15 years, and has 292 members with a church school membership of approximately 145. At the end of 1983, total assets were $386,000; and, a total of $40,606 was paid for all causes. The present pastor is the Reverend Paul M. Dennis.

ROWAN - 1925

In the year of 1925, Rowan Methodist Episcopal Church, South was organized. Worship services began in a private home. In a few short years as the number increased, they began meeting in the R. G. Kizer School.

At this time, the Methodists and the Baptists worshipped together. The Baptist preacher would preach one Sunday, and the Methodist preacher would preach the next one. Reverend Max Brandon was the first Methodist pastor to preach at the schoolhouse.

In 1939, the present structure was erected. Prior to the work being completed, worship services were held in the basement. The first funeral service was for Gordon Bost with the Reverend Jasper Boyd delivering the eulogy, and assisted by Reverend Robert Crook.

A short time after the church was completed, a new parsonage was built on the present site; and, it is believed that the Reverend Bussell was the first pastor to occupy the parsonage.

In the 1960's, an educational extension was added to the church. Average attendance at the present time is slightly over the 100 mark. The present pastor is the Reverend William F. "Bill" Thompson.

COBURN MEMORIAL - 1890

The Reverend Amos Luther Coburn led a group to some nearby dogwood trees, where they used crossties for seats; and, they decided that the southern part of the city needed a Methodist church. So in the year of 1890, a chapel was built at a cost of $325.00; and, after completion, there were 36 members.

At the age of 76, Reverend Coburn and members decided that a larger church was needed; so, the present church was built at a cost of $100,000. By 1940, the church was clear of its indebtedness under the leadership of the Reverend A. C. Wagoner.

In 1953, a pipe organ was installed at a cost of $25,000; and, the building was fully air-conditioned in 1971. Several members have entered the ministry or missionary work.

Under the leadership of its present pastor, Reverend James A. Northington, Coburn has continued to progress in many ways. A sharing group studies the Bible on each Sunday night plus a home Bible class. One new adult class has been organized. The fellowship hall has been painted, and new carpet added.

New COKESBURY HYMNALS have added meaning to the services along with Mrs. Alene Yoder, new organist and choir director, who has added many forms of church music ministry. Under the leadership of Scoutmaster, Jack Kepley, a new scout hut was built, and Eagle Scouts were recognized at the Dan Nicolas Park at a worship service held in June. Mr. Kepley saw the need to raise funds for a scout leader (now deceased), who was severly burned in a plane wreck with contributions totaling over $3,000.

United Methodist Women have been very active. The members helped with the call for assistance to tornado victims in Red Spring, North Carolina through donations of money, clothing, and sending the scouts to help with the cleaning up. They are in the process of developing a history room for historical items. Homecoming will be held the second Sunday in September.

From a small beginning, Coburn Memorial United Methodist Church has continued to do the work of the Lord.

SALISBURY: FIRST - 1783

In 1782 in the village of Salisbury, a young girl, Henrietta Cole, invited family and friends to hear the Methodist circuit rider, Reverend Beverly Allen. The group later formed a Methodist "society". The Salisbury Circuit first appeared in the Minutes of the Conferences in 1783 with Beverly Allen, James Foster, and James Hinton assigned to it. In 1784, Jesse Lee was appointed to the Salisbury Circuit, where, as he relates in his JOURNAL, "there was a society of truly affectionate Christians". Lee's successor in 1785 was Hope Hull, who was a colorful character and popular among the preachers and his superiors.

Bishop Francis Asbury chose Salisbury as the meeting place for the Conferences of Preachers in February, 1786, and May, 1787. The JOURNAL describes the first: "Next day I set off in the rain, and travelled with it; we swam Grant's creek, and reached Salisbury in the evening, wet and weary. I thought we should scarcely have preachers at the time appointed, but the bad weather did not stop their coming. We spent three days in Conference, and went through our business with satisfaction. Having sent our horses into the country, we could not get them when they were wanted; I therefore borrowed Brother Tunnell's horse, and went on to my appointments".

At the turn of the century, the Salisbury Circuit was included in the geographic area of Methodism known as the Virginia Conference. The circuit covered much of the Piedmont and mountain areas of North Carolina. Revival fever swept the area, bringing new converts to many churches. Encouraged by Asbury, Methodists succeeded in making camp meetings an integral part of their work, so that by 1810, they led other denominations in gaining new members.

By 1831, the number of Methodists in the Salisbury area (which by then was designated in the Minutes as a part of the Yadkin District of the Virginia Conference) was listed at 937. The Society in Salisbury, which was not yet listed as a separate Society, was able to purchase a plot of land in 1831 for the purpose of building a permanent house of worship. The lot, the third one in from the corner of what are now Fisher and Church Streets, was obtained from Isaac Burns, for the sum of $100.00. Trustees for the property were John C. Palmer, William Chambers, Nathaniel B. Tayler, Ebenezer Dickson, Meshack Pinkston, Elkanah D. Austin, and Enoch Brock. By the following year, a log chapel had been built. According to Conference Records, the Salisbury Circuit continued to be a part of the Virginia Conference until 1838, when a new geographical division led to the establishment of the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1839, the meeting of the Annual Conference was again held in Salisbury, and the Minutes of this Conference recorded a membership for the "Salisbury Station" of 56 whites and 20 colored. In 1844, the Salisbury congregation underwent a change of identity when it came to be a church in the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

In 1857, the membership outgrew the log chapel, which was torn down and replaced with a larger brick building. This structure remained adequate through the Civil War years, the beginning of the Sunday School, and the Women's Missionary Societies until 1916, when the Salisbury Charge began plans for a new church. Because the decision was made to build on the same site as the old one, arrangements were made to erect a temporary house of worship. In the style and spirit of the old fashioned barn-raising, the congregation gathered after Sunday morning worship, and in an afternoon erected a large

wooden building called "The Tabernacle", which was to serve the congregation for about two years. It stood on the site of the present-day Education Building of the First Presbyterian Church. On November 6, 1916, Miss Carrie Murphy, a church member, laid the first brick for the new church. On August 5, 1917, the cornerstone was laid with the church's pastor, Reverend J. W. Moore, and Dr. J. C. Rowe, Presiding Elder of the District, participating. Members occupied the building for the first time in March, 1919. The debt of $100,000 was paid, and the building dedicated on September 14, 1924 with Bishop Collins Denny preaching at the early service; and Reverend W. R. Ware delivering the evening sermon. As the new building was being readied, a new organ was being constructed, which would serve the congregation for 60 years. The salary paid to the organist, which had stood at $1.00 per week in the 1870's, had risen to $58.33 per month by 1920.

The next few years brought forth adult Bible classes; programs on Christian education for adults; missionary education activities of the organized women's groups; the establishment of the Philathea movement; community involvement; ministry with children and youth; mission studies; financial assistance for rebuilding parts of the world which had been devastated by the war; and, dividing the membership into neighborhoods for the purpose of communication.

By the late 1940's, the congregation was faced with critical inadequacies of its facilities as the membership and the involvement of persons in church activities continued to increase. By 1950, the congregation numbered 1800 with average attendance at Sunday School about 500 and at worship about 400. In 1948, the congregation raised $300,311.50 to support the building of new facilities. After the building campaign, led by Tom M. Stanback, E. A. Goodman, Jr., and Reverend C. C. Herbert, Jr., ground was broken for the construction of a new building on November 3, 1951; and, in August, 1953, the Educational Building and Fellowship Hall were formally opened during a Week of Jubilee.

In 1956, plans were begun for another $450,000 renovation, to include replacement of the 1917 sanctuary and the 60-year-old parsonage. In 1957, under the leadership of Dr. J. C. Hall and Jake Alexander, a new parsonage was built on Colony Road, and was first occupied by the family of the Reverend Harold Robinson. With the acquisition of the Cook and Nicholas property in 1956, the congregation could expand its facilities to cover the entire 200 block of South Church Street. Another building committee, led by E. A. Goodman, Jr., guided the congregation in the building of the present sanctuary, offices, and adult education rooms. The new sanctuary was to approximately replace the old parsonage in its location with a lawn replacing the area where the 1917 structure had stood. The new building was formally opened in May, 1963, during the pastorate of Reverend Harlan L. Creech, Jr. A building fund campaign begun in 1961 eventually raised over $510,000.00 to pay for the new structure and its furnishings. With the liquidation of all building debts, the new sanctuary was dedicated in December, 1966, during the pastorate of Reverend Ralph Taylor.

The Austin organ, which was built for the 1917 structure, was retained for use in the new building, along with chimes which had been given in 1943. In 1980, one hundred years after a similar episode in the life of the congregation, a new organ was installed, along with a Maas-Rowe Carillon, which

witnesses to the presence of the church in the community by striking the hour, and by broadcasting hymns from the church tower. A three-octave set of handbells were given by the heirs of Mr. and Mrs. J. Giles Hudson, Sr., which contributes to the festivity of many worship occasions.

In the new facilities, as in the old, continual efforts are made to involve children, young people, and adults in a wide variety of church activities. Scouting has a proud tradition in the congregation, with countless young people and many adult leaders involved. In addition to graded classes for children, Sunday School offers a variety of settings for adult learning and fellowship.

The church has opened its doors to the community in a variety of ways. Youth of the community have enjoyed use of the facilities at dances after school football games, and through participation in Youth Fellowship activities at T.H.E. Farm. In 1970, the Child Development Center opened, with preparation of facilities undertaken by the Christian Forum Class. Many children from the community, usually from lower-income families, have benefitted from this state-supported program of preschool education.

The church's local unit of United Methodist Women provides the women of the congregation with opportunities for education and involvement in mission in the contemporary world, just as preceding organizations did in generations past.

Today the buildings of the church are valued at $2,500,000; a far cry from the land purchase of $100. And so the congregation of First United Methodist Church, Salisbury, nearly 1300 strong in 1983, faces many of the same issues and situations in the modern world which the body of Christians who have worshipped together in the Methodist tradition in Salisbury for two hundred years has faced from one generation to another. The same challenges of evangelism, growth and nurture of members, witness to the community and mission to the world, which were met by Methodists in earlier generations, are met with conviction and enthusiasm by those who are the heirs of that original "society of truly affectionate Christians".

MAIN STREET-LONG STREET

MAIN STREET - 1898

In the year of 1898, Main Street Methodist Church "broke away" from the mother church, First Methodist of Salisbury, and began an organization of her own. The present sanctuary was constructed in 1901 with a membership of approximately 35. During the early years, the church was on a charge with Tabor and Vance Mills.

From 1903 to 1907, membership increased and the church was placed on a charge with East Spencer, and remained on this charge for almost 20 years.

With a growing membership, the members saw a need for a new church. In the year of 1924, a tabernacle was built on the corner of Eleventh and Main Streets with the hopes of a church eventually being constructed on this lot. However, due to the depression, the tabernacle was not completed or a new church built. After losing everything in the depression years, members bought

back the present building in 1929. The church members then began to rebuild that which they had lost. The church was remodeled, and later on, Sunday School rooms made of stone were added.

In 1957, the present educational building was added in order to provide more space for Sunday School activities. In May, 1966, the Ed Tucker property was purchased to provide space for a new building. Under the pastorate of Reverend J. R. Dawkins, the mortgage note was burned in June, 1967.

The church members now face the newest page to be added to the church's history - a new sanctuary. With a membership now of 188, members are proud to follow the example of their forefathers and older members of the church in the future construction of a new church in honor of the past. Their predecessors have sacrificed, and through steady giving provided them with a church home. The hopes of these faithful members today is to build, so that their children may enjoy the fulfillment that adequate facilities can offer.

LONG STREET - 1904

In 1904, Long Street Church was organized in a small white-frame chapel, which was on the site of the present church. The chapel was purchased from the Presbyterian group, and the deed was recorded on January 25, 1904. The first church was called Friendship Methodist Church, South; and, the name was changed to Long Street Methodist Church when the present building was begun in 1923.

The church was organized by Reverend J. E. Gay, who preached in the afternoon, and was pastor at Spencer, North Carolina. The first pastor appointed by the Conference was Reverend Otha J. Jones on May 27, 1905. He also served with North Main Church until May 27, 1906; then the church was supplied by Reverend C. E. Hypes; then followed by Reverend J. P. Lanning, who served 1½ years. Then J. A. B. Holderby was appointed for 3 years; Reverend C. R. Stedman, 1 year; Reverend S. E. Richardson, 4 years; Reverend R. K. Brady, 2 years; Reverend R. C. Kirk, 5 years (he started the present church); Reverend E. M. Avett; Reverend Jim Green; Reverend J. W. Campbell, 1 year; and, Reverend E. Myers.

The church's first trustees were L. H. Hatley, C. A. Nash, W. J. Hatley, E. A. Long, W. S. Hatley, C. A. Sides, and C. E. Lowder. The building committee consisted of W. E. Harkey, A. L. Nash, Mrs. O. B. Smith, Mrs. J. H. Culp, and L. S. Cotter.

During the construction of the present church, a tabernacle was built on Henderson Street, not far from the church, where the congregation worshipped in it for several years. During the leadership of Reverend R. C. Kirk, the present church was started in the early 1920's with the members doing a lot of the finished work. The Reverend E. Myers built the altar, and new pews were added. In 1950, stained-glass windows were added to the church. Miss Ethel Smith (now Mrs. Ethel West of Greensboro) donated the pulpit furniture. Other items were donated: loud speakers by Mr. J. A. Gheen; a new pulpit Bible by Mrs. Ruth Kirby; new United States and Christian flags by Mrs. W. M. Burns; new paraments, Cross, candles and vases by Mr. and Mrs. Pryde W. Waller; and, a record book for the vestibule by Mrs. T. J. Johnson.

During a "Lay Witness Service" in 1969, lightning damaged the church at a cost of approximately $5,000. No one was injured, but several cars were damaged.

Twenty-eight ministers have served the church, and of this number, ten are still living. During the last ten years, the church has lost a lot of members through death and moving.

The church has a strong and working unit of United Methodist Women, who helps in many ways, not only within the church but in the community. Long Street Church has a present membership of 104, made up of children, young people, and a lot of retired folk. The present pastor is Reverend W. Thornton Hawkins.

MILFORD HILLS - 1955

In the summer of 1955 a survey, conducted by the Western North Carolina Conference, revealed that over 100 families lived in the Milford Hills area; and, these families were excited about the possibility of a Methodist Church in this area. Under the direction of then District Superintendent, Reverend Paul Townsend, and Dr. L. B. Hayes, an organizational meeting was held at Catawba College on October 16, 1955.

The Reverend Worth A. Sweet was appointed as organizing pastor, and the Milford Hills Methodist Church was formed on November 13, 1955 with 55 members meeting at the Franklin Community Building. A lecturn made by Dr. S. O. Holland was the first piece of furniture owned by the church, and has been so labeled and preserved as a part of its heritage.

On November 10, 1956, groundbreaking ceremonies for the Fellowship Hall and Education Building at 1630 Statesville Boulevard were held; and, a single, level, campus style facility with connecting covered walkways was begun.

The first parsonage was a rented brick home located at 1919 Statesville Boulevard. On January 31, 1956, the Women's Society was organized with Mrs. Harold (Etta) Jones as its first president. On January 20, 1957, the Methodist Men's Club was organized with Q. H. Wood serving as the first president. The consecration service for the first new church building was led by Bishop Nolan B. Harmon on June 30, 1957. An "Open House" took place on September 8, 1957.

In June, 1958, Everett R. Freeman was appointed as the church's second pastor. On February 22, 1959, the congregation voted to purchase an adjoining land parcel for the parsonage at 103 Bellevue at a cost of $3,000. March, 1960 saw the start of the first Three-Year Building Fund Campaign. On May 29, 1960, members voted to build a parsonage; and, in December, 1960, the Freeman family moved into the new parsonage. During his four years of ministry, which was a family oriented period, new homes were built in the area, and young families came to the church in increasing numbers.

On January 21, 1963 under the leadership of Reverend George P. Robinson, the congregation voted to proceed with Education Building No. 2; and, in March of the same year, launched its second Three-Year Building Fund Campaign.

In May, 1964, this building was completed with classrooms; furnishings, including a nursery; separate hot air heating with a basement room for the furnace; equipment; and, a large room, which would be finished by the Men's Club a few months later. In March, 1966, the third Three-Year Building Fund Campaign was begun; and, in June, 1967, Reverend Russell N. Burson, Jr. was appointed pastor. January, 1968 saw all indebtedness retired, and in February Education Building No. 2 was dedicated; then, in December, 1968, the parsonage indebtedness was retired. On May 18, 1969, the congregation voted to build a sanctuary, which would be financed through the sale of Church Bonds at a 6½% compounded interest rate over a period of 14½ years at six month intervals. The same year Reverend Harold E. Wright was appointed pastor, who was strong on the educational aspect of the church, and influenced the final stages of the sanctuary planning.

Groundbreaking services were held in April, 1970; and, the first services in the new sanctuary was on April 11, 1971. It is worthy to note that the 30 foot redwood Cross, donated by Dr. L. B. Hayes in 1956, erected at the front corner of Education Building No. 1, was, after 14 years, relocated to the north end of Education Building No. 2 to provide for the connecting link between Education Building No. 1 and the new sanctuary.

Under the leadership of its sixth pastor, Reverend Richard A. Howle, new programs and involvement were begun: organization of the Friendly Neighborhood Club for senior citizens; establishment of a Crisis Pantry; beginning of a Fast-A-Meal; Enrichment Center for mentally retarded children; the purchase of an activity bus.

During the ministry of Reverend Robert M. Smith, Jr., a restoration of property was set for a three-year period. The 1977 project was to reroof the Fellowship Hall and Education Building No. 1, and the 1978 project was the exterior restoration of all buildings. In 1979, the grading, curbing, and paving work was completed. All four years of special projects were completed outside of the General Budget as extra mile giving by the membership.

In June, 1980, Reverend Charles Denny White, Jr. was appointed as the church's eighth pastor, and plan were begun for a 25th Anniversary Celebration, which was held on November 13, 1980 with special events and services held by former pastors. The members approved a conference room picture gallery of all past ministers.

During 1981, members were involved in a "Prayer Service and Hymn Sing" at Spencer Nursing Home; planning session by the Council on Ministries; Laity Day observed; 18th Annual Barbecue held; four sessions on "Sharing and Caring", which noted an increase in both Sunday School and Worship Service; a "Circuit Rider" plan adopted. Perhaps the outstanding single act of the year was the adoption of the "Planning Committee Report", which would focus attention of the church on the Bible, level of commitment, stewardship, caring atmosphere, unity of purpose and equipping the laity for life and ministry outside the walls of the church for the present and for the years ahead. At the end of 1981, the largest budget in the church's history was approved at $90,811.00.

As 1982 began, four goals were established as that of a "Caring Church": (1) visitation by members and pastor; (2) recognition of new members and visitors; (3) relational evangelism-to train for Christian outreach; (4) a new motto, "A Caring People-A Caring Church".

1983 began with a budget, program and covenant, using a new theme, "Focus On The Future". The Administrative Board approved a new heating and air-conditioning system for Education Building No. 1. A new Sunday School Class for "Pairs and Spares" was organized, and a CORE (Committee On Renewal Evangelism) was established. On June 1 of last year, the sanctuary debt was retired with dedication services held on November 13 with Bishop L. Scott Allen delivering the sermon. Both women and men's groups remain active and productive as well as an active youth fellowship. During 1983, 20 new members joined the church. Also General Budget receipts amounted to $85,189.21; and, the church's overall endeavors, including women, men's and youth projects, totaled $143,500 of which over $30,000 went to benevolent causes. Also the church exceeded a Conference three-year Pension Fund Goal of $11,287 by remitting a total of $13,453. Attendance at both Sunday School and Worship Services has shown an increase as well as renewed interest.

Members of the church continue to participate beyond their four walls through cluster, district and community involvement in areas such as R.C.C.M., Meals-on-Wheels, hunger walks, visits to shut-ins and the lonely, and other needy projects.

PARK AVENUE - 1899

Sensing a need for a religious center in East Salisbury, First Methodist Church of Salisbury, organized a Sunday School group in 1899, which later became Park Avenue Methodist Church. During the summer months, the class met in an old one-room school house.

It was officially organized on March 6, 1900 at the first Quarterly Conference. With strong leadership, the congregation outgrew the little school house, and in 1901, a small brick church, 35' x 54' was built on the corner of Kerr and North Long Streets. It was known as the Holmes Memorial Methodist Church. The church's pastor, Reverend R. G. Barrett, wrote, "This Charge itself is a mission. It grows slowly but from the start it has paid its missionary assessments".

On February 4, 1915, the congregation voted to sell Holmes Memorial Building, which had been condemned, and the trustees were authorized to purchase property on the corner of Park Avenue and North Shaver Streets, where it now stands. The first service held in the present church was on Sunday, June 16, 1916.

In the spring of 1940, a brick educational building had its beginning. Bishop Costen Harrell delivered the formal dedication service on April 3, 1949. In the spring of 1960, the sanctuary was remodeled at a cost of approximately $8,000.

Five young men have entered the ministry from Park Avenue Church: A. C. Tippett, Lee Lovette, V. O. Dutton, Jody Seymour, and Chris Bennett.

Park Avenue Church was originally organized to fill a need in a section of Salisbury, but during the years it has served many from every area of Rowan County. It also gave a core of loyal members as charter members of Milford Hills Methodist Church.

Through the vision of Pastor Vick, Park Avenue Church stands as it is today. Many say that its sanctuary is one of the most beautiful among the smaller churches in the Western North Carolina Conference. Many still come back to call it their "roots" in Methodism, while warming and enriching lives of many who might have never been reached for Christ through the Methodist Church.

SHILOH - 1880

Shiloh Church of the Odell School community, Concord, North Carolina was organized sometime back in the Civil War days. All the early records until 1882 have been lost. On January 31, 1882, the present site of two acres was officially deeded to the trustees for the sum of $1.00 by John A. Baker and wife, Sarah A. Baker. Trustees at that time were John A. Field, George Goodman, James Erwin, James Earnhardt, William Shimpoch, and Moore Emerson. Until that time, the church had used an arbor and an old log building somewhere in the nearby community. In 1882, the church became permanently located at the present site with the Reverend J. T. Harris as pastor.

The church has been placed over the years on the Mooresville Circuit, Rowan Circuit, Enochville Circuit, China Grove Circuit, Kannapolis Charge, Landis Charge, Shiloh-Westford Charge, Kannapolis Charge, Bethpage-Shiloh Charge, Shiloh-Bethany Charge, and in June, 1984 became a station.

In 1950-1951 under the pastorate of Reverend Ray Alber, rooms were added on to the back of the original sanctuary. In 1953, a well was dug and a project begun of remodeling the old church under the leadership of Reverend Earl A. Cook. A new roof, new sides, steeple, and memorial windows were all included at a cost of $3,000.

In 1957, a new parsonage was built upon adjoining land donated by Mr. and Mrs. John R. Benson. Reverend William Faggart was minister at that time. In 1963, a new fellowship hall and classroom building was constructed next to the sanctuary under the pastorate of Reverend James B. Long, Jr. Since that time, land has been donated by Mrs. J. W. Morrison to the church for the expansion of the cemetery. In 1982, a survey was conducted for a narrow strip of land along the driveway beside the fellowship hall to straighten the drive and provide for future parking needs. This land was made possible through a deed transfer by Mrs. Elbert Graham and Mr. Troy Sherrill. On January 31, 1982 in commemoration of the 100 year old deed, Reverend Robert L. Carter, past District Superintendent of Salisbury, preached during the morning worship service, which was followed by a covered-dish luncheon for the congregation and guests.

Present trustees of Shiloh are Paul Perkins, Jack Lail, Delbert Elwood, Ruby Smith, John Benson, and Charles Trexler; Bill Benson, Chairperson of the Administrative Board; and Reverend James R. Calloway as pastor. (1982)

Past ministers of Shiloh are as follows: J. T. Harris - 1882; J. M. Ashby - 1884; H. M. Blair - 1885; C. W. Smith - 1886; J. W. Clegg - 1888; E. C. Sell - 1889; _____ Smoot - 1890; J. D. Buie - 1890; T. L. Triplett - 1893; Thomas W. Smith - 1895; W. M. Robbins - 1896; J. A. Peeler - 1897; E. M. Marritt - 1898; J. J. Eads - 1899; E. G. Pussey - 1901; E. N.

Crowder - 1902; Al L. Aycock - 1904; R. A. Taylor - 1907; W. L. Hutchins - 1908; J. H. Sellers - 1908; J. W. Clegg - 1909; W. B. Shinn - 1910; S. L. Owens - 1914; R. L. Forbis - 1917; J.S. Gibbs - 1919; J. C. Brown - 1920; W. E. Rufty - 1925; P. E. Parker - 1928; Brooks Jerome - 1930; C. R. Allison - 1935; T. W. Hager - 1938; A. A. Lyerly - 1939; William R. McCulley - 1940; W. B. A. Culp - 1943; W. A. Rock - 1947; O. B. Mitchell - 1948; Ray Alber - 1950; Earl A. Cook - 1952; William H. Faggart - 1956; James B. Long, Jr. - 1960; William H. Osborne, Jr. - 1963; Ted Hendrix - 1964; Dwight E. Whitlock, Jr. - 1966; John R. Dawkins - 1967; Robert E. Sides - 1969; G. Mike Deal - 1973; Charles F. Gibbons - 1977; James R. Calloway - 1981.

At the end of 1983, the church reported a membership of 173 with a church school membership of 98. Total assets were $408,600; and, a total of $28,007 was paid for all causes. The present minister is Barry E. Sullivan.

SPENCER: CENTRAL - 1897

Central Church in Spencer, North Carolina had its inception with a small group of people, who met at the home of Mr. & Mrs. J. C. Chavier, now the T. F. Talbert residence on 408 South Yadkin. In July or August of the year 1897 under the direction of the Reverend D. P. Tate, the church was organized with eight charter members, who were Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Chavier, Mr. Richard Josey, Mrs. Alice Josey, Mr. Sandy S. Moore, Mrs. Janie Moore, Mrs. Julia Albright Thornton, and Mrs. Nellie Albright Freeland. In 1898, the Woman's Missionary Society was organized with 12 ladies present.

The small congregation struggled to erect a frame church building at a cost of $200.00, which was also used as a school. It was located on the northeast corner of Fourth Street and South Yadkin Avenue on the now vacant lot by the Fire Station and City Hall. In 1899, the Conference appointed Reverend R. C. Craven to serve Spencer Station, as it was known at that time. Serving on the Board of Stewards were D. C. Eagle, G. W. Pierce, S. S. Moore, J. P. Nesbitt, J. P. Chavier, J. W. Young, W. W. Lowery, and Hugh Smith. It was during the first quarterly conference of 1900 when the church name became the Spencer Methodist Church, South. On June 26, 1900, the Women's Foreign Missionary Society was organized with ten members.

On February 11, 1903, the trustees were empowered to sell the church, and purchased a lot on the northwest corner of Fourth Street and Yadkin Avenue for the construction of a new church. The lot was purchased from the Southern Railroad for $200.00; and, a new church was built shortly thereafter at an approximate cost of $2,000. It was an L-shaped brick building, and consisted of a sanctuary and two Sunday School rooms. In later records, it was reported that the first church building was sold for $40.00. The new church was located very close to where the present sanctuary stands. It was in 1903 that the hour of meeting for the Sunday School was changed from afternoon to forenoon; and, the new church was dedicated the first Sunday of July, 1903 with Bishop Warren A. Candler preaching the sermon.

During 1903-1907, the Presbyterian congregation of East Spencer "abandoned their church", and offered it for sale. Several people living near the church purchased the building for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South for a reported price of $700.00. The church was named Friendship Methodist Church,

South of East Spencer (now known as Long Street Church), and services were held each Sunday afternoon at 3:00 P.M. In 1906, Friendship assumed its place on a separate charge, leaving the Spencer Station without special mission work. In 1905, a parsonage was built at a cost of $3,112.08. In November, 1906, the congregation owned a 150' x 150' lot at the corner of Yadkin Avenue and Fourth Street with a brick church valued at $5,000, which was debt free; and, a parsonage valued at $3,500.00, which was only indebted for $400.00.

During 1916, the Sunday School was averaging an attendance of 225. On April 15, 1917, the congregation began worshipping in a public school building, because their church building was condemned as being structurally unsafe. The old church building was removed and construction of their present church began. On September 16, 1917, the cornerstone for the church was laid with Reverend C. H. Deal, Reverend S. E. Richardson, Reverend E. L. Bain, and Reverend C. M. Pickens as participants. On April 21, 1918, the basement of the new church was opened for worship before the present sanctuary was completed. On October 9, 1921, the building was finally completed at a cost of $61,832.31, and the first services were held in the sanctuary. The building was constructed of cement, brick and stone; three-stories high; and, 75' x 150' in size. In 1921, a new pipe organ was installed for $6,500. The chimes were later given to the church in 1941 by Mrs. Stella B. King. During 1925, the church received 142 new members. More than twelve times that year the church was filled to capacity. The Sunday School was so large that classroom space was made in the basement. During the years of 1922-1928, the membership grew to 732. In January, 1928, the Woman's Missionary Auxiliary was organized, which included all women of the church.

Under the leadership of Reverend W. B. Davis, the membership rose to its highest point in the history of the church to date, which was 757 in 1936. In 1937, the present parsonage was built at the same location of the older parsonage, which was built in 1905.

In August, 1939, under the ruling of the new Methodist Church, the Auxiliary was disbanded, and a new organization was formed, "The Woman's Society of Christian Service". The Wesleyan Service Guild, an organization for the working woman, was organized in 1944. By February 27, 1944, there were 102 young men and women from the church in the service of their country; and, it was during this time that an indebtedness of $2,882 on the parsonage was retired.

During the pastorate of Reverend C. W. Kirby from 1941-1947, the Talbert house and lot on South Yadkin Avenue, immediately behind the church, was bought for a sum $2,000. For a number of years, this house was rented, but in 1955, it was torn down, and the lot was cleared for future expansion of the church. On June 15, 1947, the 50th Anniversary of the church was celebrated with Bishop Clare Purcell bringing the morning sermon. The Conference JOURNAL of 1947 reported a membership of 811.

In 1950, the church budget had risen to $15,000 with the minister's salary set at $4,200 per year. With plans for a new garage, the coal house and the old garage on the parsonage property was torn down. On April 3, 1950, $283.00 was borrowed and a new garage was built with the balance paid in full in 1951. In 1952, the church received a rare gift from Mrs. W. Milton Gosney, who painted a picture of "The Good Shepherd". It was placed above the altar behind the

pulpit, and is a constant reminder of the love and devotion of a faithful member of the church. On August 19, 1954, Dr. Hugh Mauldin of the church donated property for the purpose of building a Scout Hut (20' x 30'), which was completed by November-December, 1955.

During Reverend L. R. Akers, Jr. tenure of service from 1952-1956, a rotation system for the Official Board was instituted. This was significant in that considerable "new blood" was brought into leadership of the church after a period of 21 years.

The 1960's brought forth a new bulletin board on the front lawn; a Unified Budget System; active scouting troops; renovation of the kitchen at the parsonage; a new church organist; a revival, "A Venture in Faith"; new church members; donated gifts included, an Altar Cross, brass bud vases, funds for carpet, brass candlesticks; and, a water heater for the church kitchen. In March, 1965, a building committee was appointed, and results were a new educational building. On November 17, 1967, the W. S. C. S. and the Wesleyan Service Guild sponsored the first "Bazaar and Turkey Dinner" with proceeds of $703.00 donated to the church's building fund.

On April, 1972, the brick on the outside of the church was cleaned, which included sandblasting the metal on the outside of the church and repainting same plus painting at a cost of $8,304. In 1974, the church had 535 members on roll, and the United Methodist Women reported 116 members. On February 4, 1974, records indicated that the indebtedness on the new educational building was paid in full. On January 25, 1976, the house and lot at 300 South Yadkin Avenue, located on the corner of Yadkin and Third Street, was given to the church by Marvin Rone and his brother, J. W. Rone. On August 30, 1976, the church was air-conditioned at a cost of $15,000.

On December 5, 1977, the final payment was made on the air-conditioning, and the church was free of indebtedness. During this year, the Gordon-Gobbel Bible Class presented to the church the deed to the house next to the educational building. On February 6, 1978, the trustees elected to demolish the two houses, and grade, level and plant grass. On April 23, 1978, the stained glass windows were releaded, cleaned, and plexiglass placed on the outside for storm windows at a cost of $5,079. By August 7, 1978, the houses were removed, and the church now has the full half block from Fourth Street to Third Street on Yadkin Avenue. On August 20, 1978, the first homecoming was held with a record crowd of 525 persons. On September 23, 1979, a new gas furnace with air-conditioning was installed in the parsonage for the price of $5,200.15.

On October 6, 1980, the church accepted a gift from the Estate of James Cheatham Moore in the amount of $22,567.12. $11,286.56 was applied to the church's building fund, and $11,286.56 to Central Church. On February 2, 1981, new additions included: carpet for the sanctuary, $5,778.80; cushions for the pews, $4,888; and 24 choir chairs, $973.44. During the same year, the church was free of indebtedness with a budget of $59,809, and the pastor's salary set at $14,000.

At the end of 1983, the church reported a membership of 491 and a church school membership of 157. Total assets were $685,079; and a total of $79,328 was paid for all causes. The church continues to grow and to minister daily to all members in the church and community.

UNITY - 1904

In 1904, Unity Church was organized with the building being completed in the early part of 1906. In the mid-forties, Sunday School classrooms were added to the sanctuary, and a fellowship hall was built in 1955. A new parsonage was built in 1972.

It has grown from a few members to the present number of 145 persons on the Sunday School roll, and a church membership of approximately 200. At the end of 1983, total assets were $249,450; and, a total of $34,073 had been paid for all causes.

Due to the growth the congregation is experiencing, they are looking forward to building a new sanctuary and educational building in the near future. With the prayers and dedicated service of all, the church can continue to grow and become both a teaching and healing church.

WEST ROWAN: CLEVELAND-EBENEZER-KNOX CHAPEL

CLEVELAND - 1902

What is known today as the Cleveland United Methodist Church was organized by B. F. Carpenter at the home of J. K. Valley on October 12, 1902 as the Cleveland Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The original members numbered seven, and included Mr. and Mrs. J. K. Valley, Leroy Valley, James Thompson, William Joseph Young, Mary Zelda Hair, and Katie Goodman. A frame structure was built on Church Street, and around 1910, a bell was placed in the belfry.

In the fall of 1930, the structure was remodeled, rock-veneered, sheetrocked and painted under the pastorate of Reverend R. L. Young. When this project was first suggested, H. M. Gabriel opposed the plan due to shortage of funds and the effects of the depression; but, once the church decided to proceed, he used his two red mules and wagon to haul the rocks from Woodleaf Quarry.

At one time, Cleveland Church was on the Woodleaf Circuit. In recent years, members executed a "quit-claim" to Woodleaf for any value that was involved in that Woodleaf Charge. They were also a member of the Elmwood Charge, Statesville District, which included Elmwood, Knox Chapel, Ebenezer, and Cleveland Churches. Later the church was placed in the Salisbury District along with the other two churches; and, Elmwood, being in Iredell County, elected to remain in the Statesville District. The Salisbury District Superintendent requested that another name be selected in lieu of Elmwood Charge; and, so, it is now called the West Rowan Charge.

The congregation discussed relocated its church with the other churches on the Elmwood Charge. However, the proposal was rejected, because two of the churches had cemeteries, and there was a lot of sentiment involved. Several years later members of Cleveland Church were able to purchase 10 acres of land for about $6,000 from W. E. Graham. Plans were drawn, and a building committee was appointed. Construction started, and the amount involved was approximately $60,000, all of which was paid within six years.

The round window in the back of the sanctuary was dedicated in memory of E. L. Powlas, and the stained-glass windows were dedicated in memory of Rachel

Kennedy. Members of the congregation bought a pew in memory of or in honor of someone. H. M. Gabriel's family donated the baptismal font, and the hanging lights in the sanctuary were given by the P. H. Satterwhite family in memory of Rosa Satterwhite. Jimmy Graham built a registry using wood from the old church pews, and this treasured piece of furniture now stands in the narthex of the new church.

The church that is now in use was completed in 1965 with Reverend W. W. Pryor bringing the first sermon on Easter Sunday. The building is located at the corner of Highway 70 and Bear Poplar Road with a church yard that provides ample space for a cemetery. A large picnic shelter, which was built by the church members, is located in an adjoining wooded area.

The old rock church was sold to Jimmy Graham with the understanding that the church would retain the bell as its property. Earl Lyerly (now deceased), Tommy Satterwhite, Hal Paris, J. B. (Blue) Dagenhart and others were instrumental in locating this bell tower on the new church property.

A Methodist Men's Breakfast Club was formed in 1971, which sponsors and contributes to Boy Scout Troop #309. From the earliest days of the church, the women have been totally involved. Their first organized group was called the Women's Society of Christian Service. They contribute time and funds to the needs of the church and its parsonage.

The first homecoming was held on September 19, 1982 to mark the church's 80th Birthday with many former members and their families participating. Robert Bame and Russell L. Young, Jr. are the only members, who are known to have gone into full-time Christian ministry. Hal Paris and Elnora Campbell have the distinction of having been members of the present congregation the greatest number of years; and, Mr. Paris has faithfully and competently served as the official painter. P. H. Satterwhite recently retired as the Adult Bible Class teacher after 52 years of dedicated service.

At the end of 1983, the church reported a membership of 100 with a church school membership of 60. Total assets were $218,333; and, a total of $16,570 was paid for all causes.

EBENEZER - 1853

Ebenezer Church, located on the corner of Highway 801 and Sherrill's Ford Road, was built in 1853, and a clear deed to approximately 11 acres of land was recorded in 1855. Two brothers, John A. and Osborn G. Foard, gave the land and materials for the church, which was erected by slave labor under the supervision of the trustees. The original church building included balconies for the slaves to worship with the congregation. The interior remained unchanged except for the addition of electric lights, oil heaters, and an occasional coat of paint. The straight-backed board seats were divided down the middle to separate the men and women.

Through the years Ebenezer, which was first named Methodist Episcopal Church, was part of several Methodist circuit's. Its largest membership was in 1922 when records from a Quarterly Conference meeting shows a total of

132 members. (Membership is now 60). Today Ebenezer is part of the West Rowan Charge.

During 1955, the congregation was almost ready to close its doors; however, the church prospered in faith and resources, if not in numbers (membership was 16 at that time); so, a fellowship building was erected, bathrooms installed, and a well was drilled.

Work toward building a new church began at a meeting of the Quarterly Conference on December 26, 1965; and, the building committee members broke ground for a new building in July of 1967. The congregation had prayer meeting on Wednesday night, July 19, 1967, and on Thursday morning, July 20, went back with big tractors to remove the old building to make way for a new and larger one. The old building had stood for 115 years.

During the next few months, the congregation worshipped in the fellowship hall. The first service held in the new church, which was a Service of Consecration, was on December 17, 1967 at 11:00 A.M., and a Christmas Candlelight Service was held that same evening. The cost of the building was over $40,000. The indebtedness was paid in full on May 5, 1972, and a Dedication Service was held on October 1, 1972 at 3:00 P.M. when the mortgage note was burned on the altar.

The Woman's Society of Christian Service was organized in 1954 or 1955, and they have given help to those in need in the church and community. Their activities have included gifts to shut-ins, sponsored Bible studies, purchased THE UPPER ROOM for church families, equipped the kitchen, installed carpet in the new church, installed sidewalks, bought vacuum cleaners, supported the Children's Home and the West Rowan High School Bible teacher plus numerous other projects over the years. This organization has since been re-named as The United Methodist Women, and currently has a membership of 10.

At the close of 1983, Ebenezer reported a church school membership of 61, and a church membership of 60. Total assets were $128,333; and, a total of $11,808 paid for all causes.

KNOX CHAPEL - 1879

Few written records have been kept of Knox Chapel Church. However, from what little has been found, and from information given by Mrs. G. A. Brown, granddaughter of the first owner of the Knox property, to Miss Hilda McNeely and Reverend Harry Sherrill in 1970, church members have been able to piece together some of its history.

Due to the bad conditions of the roads, the poor means of travel, and the great distance to all of the churches, the people of several denominations wanted to be able to meet and worship more often;so, they began gathering under a brush arbor erected in a hog pasture on the Knox farm around 1879. This farm, a tract of 600 acres, was given to John Knox by the King of England in 1741-1742.

On October 19, 1888, an indenture was made by James W. Knox to deed to the church a three-acre tract of land for the sum of $50.00. This indenture

was executed on August 19, 1889 and recorded in the Registrar of Deeds Office. The following are some names found on a Sunday School Roll Book dated 1889: Brincefield, Bailey, Beaver, Burch, Cook, Cowan, Douglas, Deaton, Earnhardt, Goodman, Horton, Hoffner, Knox, Ketchie, McNeely, Masters, Miller, Owens, Sigmon, Shinn, Templeton, Thompson, Umberger, and Witherspoon.

There were twelve giant forest pines felled from this property to build the first church which was, according to Mrs. Brown, erected in 1891 or 1892. The first pastor was Reverend W. M. Bagby from 1879-1892, and the church was on the Mooresville Charge.

The Statesville LANDMARK carried the following notice in its July 28, 1893 edition, "Rev. W. L. Dawson, Mooresville Circuit, will soon finish a very large church - Knox Chapel. This is a new ground and the membership is large and growing". In 1894, the church was changed to the Troutman Charge. Six years later in its July 14, 1899 edition a Statesville newspaper announced, "Knox Chapel on the Troutman Circuit will be dedicated Sunday Week. The Reverend W. M. Bagby, former pastor of the Statesville Circuit will preach the dedicatory sermon".

In 1920, the church was changed from the Troutman Charge to the Elmwood Charge; and, on March 3, 1921, records indicated that "there will be preaching at Knox's Chapel second Sunday morning by Reverend A.C. Kennedy".

According to the deed record, the now Knox Chapel Church was in what was then the North Carolina Conference and the Mooresville Charge of the Statesville District. After the first merger in 1939, the church became a part of the Western North Carolina Conference. In 1960, the Elmwood Charge transferred to the Salisbury District; and, in 1968, the new West Rowan Charge of the Salisbury District came into being with Knox Chapel, Cleveland and Ebenezer Churches.

The Church observed its homecoming on August 28, 1983 with its pastor, Reverend Brown McKinney, delivering the sermon at 11:00 A.M., which was followed by a picnic lunch and song service. During the service, Davyd Hood of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources in Raleigh, presented a certificate stating that the church is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Mr. Hood also cited the present structure as being the oldest Methodist church in Rowan County.

Among the present 83 members of the church are descendants of the first worshippers in the hog pasture.

WOODLEAF-SOUTH RIVER

WOODLEAF - 1891

On November 5, 1891, the fourth Quarterly Conference of the Methodist Church of the Salisbury Circuit was held at Centenary Church with Reverend W. L. Dawson, pastor, and Reverend J. J. Renn, Presiding Elder, in charge. At that time, the Circuit consisted of six churches; namely, Centenary, Ebenezer, South River, Evergreen, Gay's Chapel, and Mt. Tabor. The Conference elected Dr. A. L. Petree, H. B. Bailey, and A. J. Benson as building committee

members for Woodleaf Church. At the next Quarterly Conference on December 12, 1891, after Woodleaf Church was organized, Salisbury Circuit was changed to Woodleaf Charge. Mt. Tabor is not listed at any more Quarterly Conference meetings after November 5, 1891. At the December meeting, it was approved to move Gay's Chapel to Woodleaf; however, in December 1891, fire destroyed Gay's Chapel Church building, and a decision was made to build a church in each community for the convenience of the populace.

Dr. A. L. Petree donated the site of the present church, and the deed was recorded in 1892. Evergreen Church, which was located off of 801 on Needmore Road, in Woodleaf, was almost closed except for occasional services by local preachers, which did not last long. Some of the members of Evergreen moved their membership to South River, and others to Woodleaf. There were 48 charter members, all transferred from Evergreen and Gay's Chapel.

The first pulpit stand (now being used in the fellowship hall) was made by James Owens; first pews made by A. J. Benson; and, the first musical instrument was a "peddle organ" with the late Mrs. Clarence Lyerly (Virgie Alexander) as organist.

In 1895, Woodleaf Church was dedicated by Reverend F. L. Townsend, Presiding Elder, and Reverend P. E. Parker. From 1898 till 1900, Woodleaf Charge was moved to the Statesville District. On October 12, 1902, Cleveland Church was organized by the Reverend B. F. Carpenter and joined the Woodleaf Charge, which consisted of South River, Ebenezer, Woodleaf, and Cleveland Churches. At the Quarterly Conference held at Woodleaf Church on December 30, 1908 with Reverend E. G. Pusey, pastor, Gay's Chapel is present for the first time since the burning of their church.

Due to bad weather, especially in winter, and with no bridges over the creeks, Sunday School was often held in one-room school houses. Records indicated that Sunday School was held at Mount Vernon School house (once stood above fourth creek on Cool Springs Road, Mount Vernon community); Hart School house (once stood off Cool Springs Road on Hart Road); and, Morrison School house (once stood on Pot Neck Road). These school houses were used for Sunday School until the middle of the 1920's.

In 1914, carpet was laid at the expense of $29.00, and in 1915, repairs were made on the church building. A folder printed in 1915 with Reverend J. W. Kennedy as pastor reads on front, "Roll of Membership and Weekly Assessments for Pastor's Salary". The roll of the five churches are listed, and the pledges each person made, which varied from 1¢ to 25¢ per week. During World War I, twelve men served their country from Woodleaf. In 1922, an Epworth League was organized. During the same year, Reverend J. C. Umberger, pastor, reported, "By order of the Bishop, 132 members who belonged to Cleveland and Ebenezer Churches were transferred to the Elmwood Circuit", leaving Woodleaf, South River, and Gay's Chapel on the Woodleaf Charge. In the fall of 1925, $100.00 was raised to paint the church; and in 1926-1927, the church was "underpenned" with funds from the Ladies Aid Society. On December 14, 1927, the church's first bazaar was held; and, ever since then, except for two years, bazaars have been sponsored by the women of the church.

In 1932, the first Missionary Society was organized with 16 members, and the first homecoming was held, and has been an annual event except during the

polio epidemic. In March, 1941, preparations were under way to erect a new church building under the pastorate of Reverend G. W. Williams. The old church was split in the middle and "spread out", and was used in the walls of the present church. During World War II, it was very difficult to get any labor; so, the women of the church would work along with Reverend Williams. With horse and "drag pan", D. D. Pope, Sr. and Jess Painter carried "lots and lots" of dirt out to make room for the fellowship hall the members are enjoying today.

In the late summer of 1943, Nell Griffin (Chaffin), president of the Methodist Youth Fellowship, went to the parsonage, and was informed that Reverend Williams was at the church. It was dark, but when she arrived at the church, she saw him on his knees with a trowel in his hands, leveling the cement porch with only his car lights for light. That is one of the reasons why the Conference JOURNAL, after his death, said with hammer and saw "he built the Woodleaf Methodist Church". On September 25, 1943, the cornerstone was laid with Reverend G. W. Williams, Pastor; Reverend E. H. Neese, Salisbury District Superintendent; Reverend J. E. Abernathy; and Professor J. M. Ormond of Duke University participating. On July 29, 1945, a special service was held by the Youth Fellowship for the World War II service men, and the American and Christian Flags were presented to the church. The men's names are written in the "Book of Remembrance" in the Chapel at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. In 1947, pulpit furniture, pews and carpet were installed; also, the Evergreen Church property was sold. During the pastorate of Reverend H. C. Freeman (1946-1949), a Junior Choir was organized with 15 to 18 children involved. New white choir robes were made, and are still usable today.

In 1950, the first electric organ was purchased. In 1952, two new rooms and bathrooms were added in the basement of the church, and a deep well was drilled. The church grounds were graded and seeded, and shrubbery was given by Mr. and Mrs. Quillman Wood. During 1952-1953, the kitchen was furnished by members and organizations within the church. In 1953, METHODIST HYMNALS was given by different church members. On March 15, 1953, the present church was dedicated. Participants were Reverend J. C. Swaim, Pastor; Reverend J. C. Cornette, District Superintendent; Reverend G. W. Williams, former Pastor; and, H. D. Bailey. In 1954-1955, the belfry and lighted cross was built at a cost of $1,500. The bell from the old church was placed in the belfry, and is used every day.

In January of 1955, Nell Griffin (Chaffin) started recording the history of the church from the senior citizens. Mr. Tom Murph of South River Church Road sent word he had "something he wanted to tell her about the early preachers". "Mr. Tom", as he was known, remembered the first pastor and others that had followed. He talked (with tears in his eyes) about how his and Mrs. Murph's home was a "stopping place of rest", before cars and after cars, for the preachers and their horses or horse and buggy, on their mission from Woodleaf to South River Church. Years ago the winters were so cold that ice or snow stayed on the ground for several months without melting. Preachers soon learned of "Mr. Tom's" concern for them, and often stopped at the house beside of the road to "thaw out" their clothing, which sometimes would be covered in ice or snow; and, of course, the horses were fed and watered. Mrs. Murph always had hot coffee and food waiting for them. Sometimes they would spend the night if it kept snowing or sleeting. In the summer, it was the same to stop, feed the horse, and rest. ("Mr. Tom" died in July of 1956).

On September 19-23, 1956 at a Conference meeting in Winston Salem, North Carolina, Gay's Chapel became a station church, leaving Woodleaf and South River on the Woodleaf Charge, and they remain so today. On March 17, 1956, a letter from Bishop Costen Harrell was read to the Official Board concerning the certification of Mrs. Mabel J. Snider to have full clergy privileges in the Woodleaf Charge. She was the first woman minister on the Charge. On March 4, 1957, Mrs. D. D. Pope became the first woman to receive a Life Membership Pin and Certificate in the Woman's Society of Christian Service. During the same year at a Quarterly Conference meeting, approval was given to renovate one Sunday School classroom into a Chapel. In January, 1958, work began on the building of a chapel room, and the pews, which were re-worked and painted, from the old church were placed in this room. On July 12, 1959, the Chapel was dedicated on homecoming day. During 1958-1960, a new parsonage was built on land given by the late George Steele and Mrs. Steele of the South River Church. It is located on Cool Springs Road in Cleveland, North Carolina. The old parsonage, which was located in front of the Woodleaf Post Office, was remodeled several times through the years; and, in agreement with Gay's Chapel, South River, and Woodleaf, was sold at public auction on August 29, 1959. Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Gillean were the first to own this home, and it is now owned by the Woodleaf Fire Department.

Events in the 1960's included: dedication of the present parsonage; Mrs. Frank J. Stough, second woman to serve as a licensed minister; purchased a new organ, costing $1,787.05; sponsored mission studies; purchased new (red) METHODIST HYMNALS; bought New Testaments for sanctuary pews; built a ramp; made new choir robes; repairs on church and parsonage.

In 1970, the following things were accomplished: a new piano was purchased for $795.00; Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Barber gave a complete set of paraments; carpet installed in two classrooms; Ladies and Men's Bible Classes purchased new chairs for their respective rooms; fellowship hall painted; repair and improvements to the kitchen; construction of utility building behind the church; trees removed (back and side of church) for proper care of building; lighting improved in the Chapel; and a contribution of $100.00 to the Woodleaf Volunteer Fire Department from the women's organization, which has become an annual contribution. Events that followed included: established a Benevolence Fund; refinished three bedrooms and added new carpet and drapes at the parsonage; purchased 4.37 acres of land from the Hugh Bailey family for a cemetery or parking space as needed; purchased a Baptismal Font; purchased a hearing aid system for the sanctuary; recorded services for shut-ins; installed air-conditioning; purchased pew cushions at a cost of $1,540.

In 1980, (after months of gathering, typing, and setting of about 500 recipes) the United Methodist Women had a cook book printed, which is still available today. A new piano was given by Dr. and Mrs. Ralph Gardner, and dedicated on homecoming day on June 7, 1981. During this year several items were contributed, including altar kneeling cushions; gold vase in vestibule; white linen element covers; a Chrismon tree; and, 20 lap robes were made by the women for the shut-ins. In 1982, the congregation purchased its first "manufactured" choir robes. The same year carpet was added in the fellowship hall, hall ways, and Elementary IV-VI Sunday School classrooms. Also during this year, $3,000 was spent at the parsonage for covering exposed wood on the outside with aluminum plus the addition of a new refrigerator. In 1983, the United Methodist Women had the kitchen completely remodeled, refinished, and

all new equipment added at a cost of $3,618.76. During the same year, major repairs were made on the church, costing approximately $5,700. B. F. Carpenter, Jr., who is 82 years old, relived a bit of history in 1983, when he visited his birthplace, the old Woodleaf parsonage across from the Woodleaf Post Office. Carpenter's late father, who organized Cleveland Methodist Church in 1902, was minister at Woodleaf from 1901-1903. Numerous activites and special services have been held in 1984 with a present membership of 147, and the Reverend S. T. Jones is pastor.

SOUTH RIVER - 1834

The South River Church is situated in the extreme northwest Rowan County near the Iredell and Davie County lines. It is one of two churches on the Woodleaf-South River Charge of the Western North Carolina Conference in the Salisbury District. Its present membership is 212, and the church enjoys the distinction of having retained the original name and location since it was organized 150 years ago this year - 1984.

Very early records and land deeds indicate that the church was one of the earliest permanently established religious centers of the Methodist denomination. At the time of the deeding of this land (upon which the church is built), the church was in the Yadkin Circuit, which embraced practically all of the western part of the state of North Carolina west of Salisbury; and, was attached to the Pittsylvania Conference in Virginia for the years of 1834, 1835, and 1836 when the North Carolina Conference was formed.

The original land deed upon which the church stands was drawn up in 1834 between Alexander Smoot and the original trustees of the church; namely, Samuel Luckey, Thomas Rancher, Samuel Felker, John Luckey, G. W. Pearson, James Smith, Daniel Dwiggins, and Ashley Dwiggins. (This information is inscribed on the headstone of Mr. Smoot, which stands today in the South River Cemetery).

A partial description of the original church at South River is taken from records by Mr. James Smoot in 1933, and reads as follows: "The original South River Church building, built upon the aforesaid grounds, was built of large hewn forest pine logs and was foursquare, the walls having been about 40-plus feet in length and about 20-plus feet in height to the eaves-boxings, and the exterior was weather-boarded with pure heart forest pine lumber, but which weather-boarding was never painted."

"Inset in the walls and conforming to the architectural design of the building were two windows to each side to light the first or ground floor, and a third window on the north side above and behind the high box pulpit to shed light upon the sacred desk and the Revealed Word that rested on the bookshelf, which possibly, there were yet other windows to light the spacious gallery overhead, the glass window panes having been about 6 x 8 or 8 x 9 inches."

"There were three ample door spaces - a front door looking south, and two side doors looking east and west respectively. There were also two correspondingly ample aisles - one leading from the front door on the south to the high box pulpit before mentioned on the back or north side, and one leading east and west and crossing the aisle leading from the front door, formed the

first or ground floor into four equal meeting squares, with possibly the spaces of two benches directly in front of the pulpit, where in winter, as late as in the 1880's, a stove was used to warm those who might have been privileged to sit near to its red-hot sides. The benches were of a dignified pattern and well made, but possibly they were not so comfortable as are the usual patterns used in the best churches of today."

"The interior walls were dollied up and down with what today would be graded double first-class forest pine lumber, while a nice paneled balustrade shut in the gallery which was well supported by square boxed posts. Leading from inside either side door ascended well built stairways to the gallery which extended across the south, east and west sides, and all the carpenter work was first-class in its finish and representative of the joiner's art of that day."

The above mentioned building housed the South River congregation for the next 48 years. In 1882 under the leadership of the Reverend G. A. Oglesby, the congregation set out to build a new and larger place of worship. In 1883, a frame building was erected, and dedicated four years later with the Reverend T. A. Stone, pastor, who had succeeded Reverend Oglesby two years earlier as minister.

The congregation worshipped in this building for 63 years, and in 1949, this building was replaced by a brick structure, which is used today. The building was from the beginning unsatisfactory. It consisted of a sanctuary over a full basement in which was located the only Sunday School rooms. The problem arose when only about three feet of dirt was removed for the basement area. This, of course, caused the sanctuary to be about 10 feet in the air, and required lengthy, steep steps to the entrance. This was the only door to the sanctuary, and in order to move to the basement area where the classrooms were, it was necessary to go outside the building and enter from either end.

In 1977, this problem was greatly enhanced by filling in and landscaping the grounds leading to this main entrance, and by eliminating a portion of these steps and redesigning the remaining ones. In 1979 and 1980, a fellowship area, kitchen and classroom space was added to the facility.

According to existing records, lumber and materials for the construction of each of these three buildings were donated by the people of the church. A total of 99 ministers have served South River Methodist Church.

Today this old church and cemetery stand as "silent sentinels", and solemn reminders to those who assemble here to worship of their rich heritage, which has passed from generation to generation.

YADKIN - 1930

In the process of getting organized, Yadkin Church was placed on a two-point charge with Long Street, East Spencer, North Carolina. They met in a cafe building for several years, possibly seven. Many of the people in the church had moved their membership to Greers' Chapel in Davidson County. The Methodist Conference supplied pastors, and operated it as a mission. There

was a Methodist service one Sunday, and a Baptist service the next with both working together in Sunday School and worship. The first ministers who served were approximately in this order: Reverend V. O. Dutton, Reverend McMillian, Reverend Lee Lovett, Reverend J. Max Brandon, Reverend Strickland, Reverend H. S. Pinkston, and Reverend Ebenezer Myers.

In the spring of 1930 under the leadership of Reverend Myers, a church was built with W. A. Casper and Carl Webb employed as contractor and brick mason, respectively. The flock had dwindled down to 13 members and some loyal friends. The church building cost $2,700, and was paid for by the North Carolina Finishing Company, which was owned by The Erlangers' at that time.

The Methodist Conference furnished the church pulpit furniture, pews and chairs for the Sunday School rooms. J. H. Lanning canvassed the mill, and made up money to purchase a piano. Reverend Myers, pastor, built the altar and communion table in light oak. The church bell was given by the overseers of the Finishing Company at a cost of $70.00, and for several years the Company furnished coal.

In November, 1930, the cornerstone was laid with the dedication service led by Dr. H. C. Sprinkle, Sr., Presiding Elder. In the same year, Reverend Myers' salary was set at $100 for the year. Conference was at hand, and a year's work behind him - by work, it meant simply just that. He toiled and worked building the church, looking after the job, pastored Long Street Methodist for a sum of $900, and was pastor of Yadkin Church. At Yadkin just a week or two before Conference, he had received $15 on his salary. Several new church members, who had transferred from the Baptist Church, set out to raise the balance of his salary, and he went to Conference with a paid in full report; and, was returned for another year.

At the end of 1931, the Sunday School had grown considerably with a lot of children in the village, and the church's growth potential looked good. During this year, R. L. (Bob) Young, a member of Smith Grove Baptist Church, donated the offering plates, and served as Assistant Superintendent of the Sunday School. J. H. (Uncle Jim) Lanning was Sunday School Superintendent.

Reverend Myers loved to sing, and especially enjoyed the old camp meeting songs. He completed two years at Yadkin on November, 1931. He visited the church for the last time on October 17, 1943, when he preached at the 11:00 A.M. service, and attended the dedication of Long Street Church at 7:00 P.M.

Over the years, improvements have been made in the church, and special equipment added; namely, the addition of a basement with new furniture in 1955 during the pastorate of Reverend George W. Dalton. Margaret Sells Taylor provided leadership in getting the Memorial Windows during the ministry of Reverend W. B. Penny in 1959. Ruby Safley Greene led the drive for an organ during the pastorate of Reverend Penny in 1957. The Methodist Youth Fellowship provided the Cross and Candle Holders for the altar table. New light fixtures for the sanctuary were installed in 1971; and, the church was air-conditioned in 1972 under the leadership of Reverend B. R. Hillard.

At the end of 1983, the church reported a membership of 80. The present pastor is Reverend Roy E. Bell.

WHITHER SHALL WE GO?

"Through all the past Thy truth we trace,
Thy ceaseless care, Thy signal grace;
O may our children's children prove
Thy sovereign, everlasting love."

-Benjamin Copeland

Many years ago at Riverside Church in New York City I heard their Senior Minister, Dr. Robert J. McCracken, preach a Communion Meditation on "The Fine Art of Remembrance". His central idea was that "we are what we are by virtue of what we choose to remember".

Through this volume the many persons, who prepared these materials, have "chosen" to remember some important things. They have done so in order that we, and others after us, might also remember. Between the lines in invisible ink is also the record of the love of the Church by laity expressed in responsible decision-making, generous sharing, persistent support, and actions of hand and feet. Also there is the record of faithful and determined witness to Gospel truth and its relevance for their locale by ordained and local pastors through word and deed. It's informative to our present, and inspiring for our future that we modern persons of the Church choose to remember these things!

Let me challenge you to write one additional chapter for this book, which you alone can write. It will be a very personal one. This will be the chapter recording again upon your heart the special church events from your own history, which are memorable because of their lingering influence upon your life. Perhaps it will include the Bible stories told to you by a volunteer Sunday School teacher, your Church membership class and Confirmation service, a youth retreat or summer camp, a graduation service, a Revival experience, your wedding, the baptism of your children, the final moments of tribute in worship for a loved one ..... It should also include persons: Parents,

Sunday School teachers, Ministers, Church leaders, youth counselors, Scoutmasters, special friends found through the Church, workers with you on projects ..... These are part of your special inheritance, your special blessings.

"O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be ..."

Choose to remember these events and persons now, and it may make a new difference in who and what you are today.

Over the National Archives Building in Washington, where historical records are stored, appear the words, "The past is prologue". The past is just the beginning to what can be. Since 1834 and earlier (the Salisbury District appeared in the Virginia Conference appointments by that name for one year in 1807), our Salisbury District has been a part of the Methodist family and witness. I wonder what persons will record about our church life and personal discipleship 150 years from now. Only you and I can determine that as by our devotion to Christ and His Church, we write our own chapter. Choosing to recall history can either be an interesting detour into what was, or a dynamic force toward what can be. These historical recollections could serve their best purpose, if they led us to an altar of renewed offering of self and rekindled love for the Body of Christ in our own time and place.

"built upon the foundation of the apostles
and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being
the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure
is joined together and grows into a holy
temple in the Lord ....."
Ephesians 2:20-21

Orion N. Hutchinson, Jr., D.D.
Salisbury District Superintendent - 1984
The United Methodist Church

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